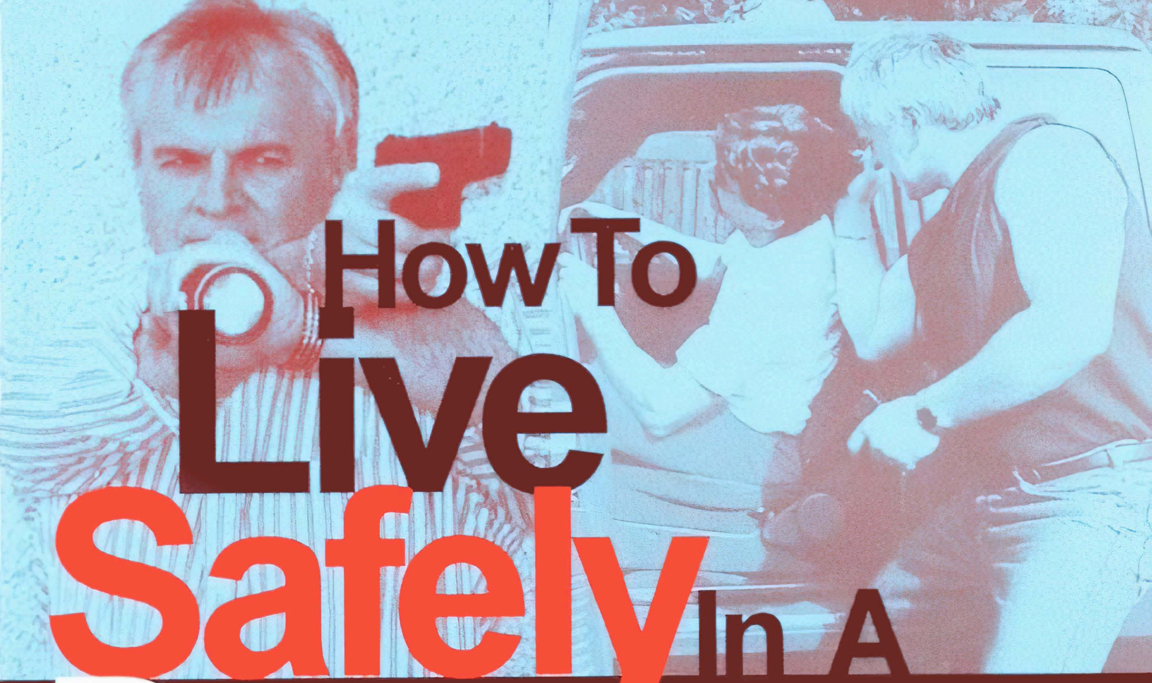

How To Live Safely In A Dangerous World

"The most complete, practical guide on self-protection ever written!"

Loren W. Christensen

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DEDICATION

This book is dedicated to every crime victim who has suffered physical and emotional pain. May you find peace and the strength to carry on.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

With love to my Special Ones—Amy, Dan, Carrie, and Gina—for being so tolerant of the hours I spend behind the keyboard. A big thanks to my desk partner Officer Steve Taylor who put up with it Tuesday through Friday each week.

A salute to my colleagues at the Portland Police Bureau, too numerous to name, who patiently gave of their expertise whenever I asked them. A special thanks to Mary Otto, self-defense instructor and rape prevention expert with the Bureau, for making suggestions on the overall project, and taking the time to edit the chapter, RAPE.

Thanks to the photographers who helped behind the camera: Sue Hill, Lana Deaton, and Gina McGriff.

A special thanks to my patient models: Amy S. Christensen, Dan L. Christensen, Carrie L. Christensen, Lester B. Christensen, Frances Christensen, Gina McGriff, Mark Whited, Rachel Whited, Kara Reid, Meghan Markantonatos, Sara O'Donnell, and Tom Hatch. The old gray-haired guy is me.

Table Of Contents

INTRODUCTION 9

PART ONE - CRIMINALS

THE TYPICAL STREET CRIMINAL - 17
BE ALERT - 22
MAKE A PLAN - 32
YOU CAN'T ALWAYS COUNT ON WITNESSES - 36

PART TWO - HOME & NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

BURGLARY - 41
NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH - 63
MAKING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE FOR KIDS - 65
WALKING THE SIDEWALKS SAFELY - 81
AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES - 92
STREET GANGS - 95
VIOLENCE IN SCHOOL - 103

PART THREE - ARMED SELF-DEFENSE

SHOULD YOU KEEP A GUN IN THE HOUSE? - 111
HOME DEFENSE - 125
CHEMICAL SPRAYS - 145
IMPROVISED SELF-DEFENSE WEAPONS - 150
CITIZEN'S ARREST - 155

PART FOUR - CAR SAFETY

AUTO THEFT - 158
CARJACKING - 162
WHEN YOU DRIVE ALONE - 169
DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS - 180

PART FIVE - RAPE

ACQUAINTANCE RAPE - 187
DATE RAPE - 194
THE STAGES OF RAPE - 197
CAN A WOMAN RAPE A MAN? - 209
THINK ABOUT THIS MEN - 210
STALKING - 212
A FINAL THOUGHT - 217
ABOUT THE AUTHOR - 219

INTRODUCTION

People are afraid. They are afraid of house burglars, car thieves, muggers, carjackers, stalkers, child molesters, high-rise snipers, freeway maniacs, rapists, armed home intruders, street gangs, and enraged postal workers.

Considering today's insane headlines, people are afraid for good reason. Last month twenty bodies were found buried in the backyard of a "quiet man's" East Coast home; last week on the West Coast, a middle-aged man opened fire on a playground full of school children; two days ago in Florida, thugs pulled tourists from their rental cars and killed them; yesterday in San Francisco, a man walked into a high-rise and commenced a shooting spree that killed nine people. Sadly, these tabloid-like headlines have become almost routine and each new one seems to top the last.

Many middle-class neighborhoods are virtually under siege from car prowlers, graffiti vandals, burglars, and gangs. Poverty stricken areas have become war zones, where daily gunfire is as common as the inhabitant's rage and despair.

Some observers insist that the epidemic of fear sweeping this country is a result of media hype, while others argue that politicians are creating the fear in order to gain support for their anti-crime platforms. Are the media and politicians really to blame or is the fear hard earned?

Ask a room full of adults how many have been burglarized, three quarters of the hands go up, and ask how many have had their cars stolen or broken into, and nearly every hand waves. Ask a classroom of children in any major city how many have seen assaults, stabbings and shootings, hands go up - in some cities every hand will raise. While the media and politicians may be adding fuel to the fire, there are millions of people, that is, victims, who are fearful as a result of firsthand experiences.

Whatever the cause, people are anxious about crime; survey polls show that concern about personal safety and home security is foremost in the minds of the American public. A recent Justice Department's survey showed there are over 6 million people victimized by crime every year, a number considered conservative since many victims choose not to report crime, even anonymously. Basic crime—all property and violent crimes per 100,000 people—was 190 in 1960, 400 in 1970 and has increased in the 1990s to about 600. Arrests for violent crimes committed by youths has increased by 91 percent since the 1970s, and since 1985, the murder rate by teens under 18 has increased 92 percent, though the teen population has remained constant. A projected increase of 23 percent in the teen population by the year 2005 will probably increase the percentage even more.

This brings up the issue of teens and capitol punishment. Though 77 percent of Americans support the death penalty (according to a Time/CNN poll), many experts don't believe it has a positive effect on deterring crime, especially among the teenage population. Violent crime by 14-17 year-olds has increased by 124 percent, an age relatively unconcerned with the threat of the electric chair, especially those young people who live in violence everyday. Stranger to stranger crimes account for an ever increasing volume of police reports in cities large and small. At one time, most murders were committed by friends and relatives. But over the past few years, the number of murders committed by strangers has increased over 30 percent, and since quiet, sleepy communities are no longer immune to heinous crimes, fearful people are wondering if there is any safe place.

If we are in the throes of an epidemic of crime, the question that has to be asked is, why? Is it our fascination with firearms—there are over 200 million of them in this country—or does the fault lie with the dopers, the sellers and users of crack cocaine? What about television and movie violence? Is the boob tube, as some so vehemently argue, really warping young, impressionable minds? Or is it because so many of our nation's children are being raised by single parents and abusive parents? Perhaps it's because we are in the middle of another crime wave. We know that historically we have had a surge of criminal violence in the United States every 50 years or so, dating back to the 1800s. Are we riding the wave of another?

We know the justice system has problems. In fact, sometimes it seems as if it's upside down, coddling criminals, treating victims poorly, and making the job of policing difficult, sometimes impossible for officers who only want to protect people from the criminal element. The prisoner population in this country has increased from less than a quarter million in 1974, to over a million today. Yet violent offenders spend an average sentence of two years behind bars and murderers serve less than 7 years.

More police officers may or may not be the answer. In a survey of eight major cities by *US News and World Report*, it was found that more police officers didn't always mean fewer crimes. For example, Washington DC has the highest police-population ratio of any major city, yet still has the highest violent crime rate. On the other hand, Houston reported a 22 percent crime drop during a two-year period when it hired on overtime to create an equivalent of several hundred additional officers.

Many cities around the country are fighting crime with a concept called community policing, an idea that brings the police and the community into a partnership to fight crime together. It brings to the crime fighting effort more resources, more minds, and a recognition by everyone that crime is not just a police problem but the problem of every person in the community. Many cities have had positive results from community policing, but still crime rages on in those cities and people are still getting hurt by the criminal element.

This book recognizes there are criminals out there who want to take from you, and hurt you. Yes, they may have been abused as children, or they may have watched too much MTV when they were toddlers. But for our purposes here, we are going to leave conjecture as to why they act criminally to those people who have time to think about that. You bought this book because you want to learn how to avoid them, and if that's not possible, you want to know how to survive your contact with them.

Recognizing that the courts, prisons, police, and all the special programs with their weaknesses and strengths can't do it all, this book stresses that you have to take responsibility for your personal safety. This starts with the recognition that there are many situations in your life where you can be victimized, and if you go about your day carelessly, you increase your chances even more.

Know this fact: most people become victims because they don't take the extra steps to avoid dangerous situations. It's also a fact that if you take cautionary measures, you will dramatically reduce the chance of being victimized. Here is the good news: cautionary measures are not difficult, though at first some may seem inconvenient. But once you have established them as routine, they will be part of your life style.

This book is jam-packed with information to keep you and your family safe in every area of your life. If you become paranoid, especially after reading the true anecdotes sprinkled throughout, I apologize. But the paranoia will pass and hopefully the advice will remain with you and be used.

The book addresses many issues that are hot topics in the 1990s. For example, avoiding a carjacking, eradicating drug houses, surviving violence in the schools, and what to do if you find yourself in the middle of a drive-by shooting. A relatively large section is given to date rape and acquaintance rape, a sometimes complex issue that is of special interest to today's young, single women. A section on stalking follows because it often leads to rape, sometimes murder.

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The book also takes a hard look at shooting a home intruder. Though the thought of having to defend one's home with a firearm may be abhorrent to some readers, it nonetheless happens everyday in this country. I don't preach one way or the other on the issue, but as a police officer who has investigated accidental shootings, I firmly believe that if you choose to have a gun in your home, it's paramount you not only know how to shoot it, but you know how to shoot it to survive.

Read the book from cover to cover or look first at the sections that relate to your specific needs. There will be some techniques you may have heard before, and they are here because they still work. Some of the material will be new to you and will hopefully excite you, while other information will debunk what you previously thought was the right thing to do.

Please don't automatically discard a technique or a concept because it doesn't go along with what you have always believed. Chew on it for awhile. It just might be the thing that saves your life.

May you and your family be safe.

PART ONE

CRIMINALS

THE TYPICAL STREET CRIMINAL

Contrary to what some people believe, few criminals attack you because they need food for their hungry children or warm clothes for their sick mothers. Survival is seldom the motive behind their assaults, robberies, rapes and break-ins. Instead, they are driven to hurt you and take from you to satisfy several other needs: they need to add your possessions to their life style; they have a psychological need to intimidate and have power over you; they need to establish or maintain a criminal reputation in their neighborhood; and they need money to feed their drug habit. These needs are strong and they will do whatever it takes to satisfy them.

There is also the psychologically disturbed criminal who commits crimes solely for the pleasure he gets from the act. He doesn't need your possessions nor does he have to hurt you, but he will just for the fun of it. He will assault an elderly woman just for the joy of it and do so without conscience or any sense of remorse. He will ignore pleas for mercy, though he will take pleasure from hearing them.

The narcotic addicts are dangerous individuals who are so desperate to get money or goods to feed their habit that they will hurt anyone who blocks their way. It's usually impossible to talk to them because they are either high or their brains are burned out. If you get into a physical confrontation with them, they will fight like a starving animal.

Generally, today's burglar, rapist, mugger, car thief and as-

There are hundreds of thousands of street criminals like this in the United States who take pleasure in intimidating you and taking what is yours.

sailant is not the sophisticated criminal we see on television and in the movies. In reality, these predators rarely plan their crimes more than a few minutes before they do them, which makes them indiscriminate and dangerous. When they see an easy target they react almost reflexively, giving little or no thought to the act.

If your house looks like an easy entry, the average burglar will knock on the door to see if you are home. When there is no answer he kicks it in, gets your VCR and exits a minute later. A street mugger will see an old man hobbling along with a cane, hit him in the face with a brick, kick him in the head, all for the pleasure of it and for the few dollars the old man has in his wallet. No planning, no conscience.

Motives

Predators want immediate gratification and they don't want to work hard for it. They always look for an easy mark, one that appears vulnerable and afraid.

Some criminals are more interested in the respect they get from their peers than they are in obtaining stolen possessions. The maintaining or establishing of their all-important reputation is paramount in everything they do.

Some criminals thrive on the high they get from intimidating people and creating an aura of fear in the neighborhood. Their look, their demeanor and their random acts of violence strikes terror in people who are trying to live peaceful, normal lives. Street criminals get a rush knowing they are feared, a response they define as "getting respect." They look at average people as wimpy suckers who are there to frighten, to take from, and to hurt.

The Mentally Unpredictable

There are some people who will shoot you because you bumped shoulders with them while passing in the street, or they will stick you with a knife because they didn't like the look they thought you gave them. These are extremely dangerous people because it's not always immediately apparent they are mental cases. Since they don't all wrap tin foil around their foreheads and talk to aliens, they are not always recognizable until you are in a confrontation with them and they suddenly explode in your face.

One example of such a person is the motorist who begins screaming and slapping the hood of your car because he thinks you took his parking place. The rational person who thinks he has been wronged might grumble or wave an obscene gesture at you. But when a person erupts into a rage over a minor incident, it's instantly clear who you are dealing with.

The Mentally Unpredictable might be dressed nicely and carrying a brief case or even have a toddler in tow, but when he erupts over some small matter, it's a clear indication you need to get away. Most likely anything you say will fall on deaf ears because you are unable to penetrate his brain. Your Psychology 101 techniques will not work because you are not dealing with a rational person.

The meter maid ordered a tow truck because the parked BMW had over 200 dollars in unpaid parking tickets. Just as the truck arrived, the car owner, a fifty-year-old upscale woman, powerfully dressed in a business suit, carrying a leather attache case, and a cellular phone, walked up and asked calmly what was going on. When she was told that her car was being towed, she began screeching like a banshee and pushed the meter maid and the tow driver, preventing them from coming near her car. When the police arrived and told her the tow was a court order, she leaped on the hood of her car, crawled up onto the windshield and kicked and swung her attache case at the officers.

It took three officers to get her off the car and into handcuffs.

Avoid getting confrontational with a Mentally Unpredictable person and never deliberately provoke him further. Just a few years ago such a person would rant and roar and maybe launch a sucker punch. He still does that today, but he is also likely to go to his car, retrieve a gun and open fire.

Your best plan of action is to get away. Let him win or at least think he did, then leave quickly, keeping your eye on him in case he decides to jump you when you turn your back.

Profile Of A Street Criminal

Police officers dress to show who they are and so do nurses, mail persons and Boy Scouts. Street thugs, whether they be petty thieves, drug users, or gang members, also have a specific look to show who they are. Their dress, their demeanor and their language, conveys to everyone that they are different and special. They want you to believe they are tough, tougher than you, and that they are your worse nightmare. Indeed, they may be some of these things or maybe none of them at all. The illusion they create, however, can be quite convincing.

Their baggy clothes, boots, headbands and spiked bracelets are adornments used to convince themselves, and you, that they are dangerous. To get a greater sense of power and invincibility, they associate with others who dress and act the same way. They need the trappings of the clothing and they need the strength the group provides them because they find the world to be a frightening place. Individually many of them are cowards, but as a group, or gang, they become courageous and a force to reckon with.

When people react to them with fear, it reinforces what they so desperately want to believe about themselves. The frightened looks they get, the way people move out of their way as they strut down the sidewalk, all reinforce their belief that they are important, that they are somebody.

They have experience at being predators: breaking into your car, deliberately blocking your way on the sidewalk, verbally harassing your spouse, and so on. There is a certain smoothness to their actions and they have an expectation as to how you will react. In fact, they probably know how you are going to respond even before you do.

You may think their clothing and other adornments are silly, even funny, and though you know most of them are cowards, you must never forget that they are predators. For sure, much of what they are about is a facade, but their numbers and their access to weapons can make your contact with them very dangerous.

BE ALERT

"BE ALERT - WHAT THE WORLD NEEDS IS MORE LERTS," reads a poster.

"Few street crimes can occur without the element of surprise," a street criminal's axiom.

Danger is all around us, but most people fail to see it until it's too late. Their eyes may be open, but they can't see with them because their thoughts are somewhere in space, or they are so naive that they are oblivious to danger.

"I easily stalked and attacked one of my victims," says a convicted rapist, "She was distracted by her portable headset." He attacked another woman who was leaning against her car in a parking garage. "She was staring blankly into space," he says, "So I just crept up behind her."

Perhaps you have lived in your neighborhood for several years and routinely make a four-block walk to the grocery store. Chances are you have walked the stretch hundreds of times without any problems, and as a result, you now stroll along with no more concern than if you were walking from your TV to the bathroom. You are so caught up in the mundane act of walking to and from, you do it by rote, paying little attention to your surroundings.

When you are new to a neighborhood it's just as easy to be oblivious to the signs of danger because the tendency is to see only the beautiful, tree-lined streets and the trendy shops. You are so caught up in the new forest, you are unable to see what is lurking behind the trees.

Whether you are new to an area or you have simply become complacent in your old neighborhood, pure luck may be the only thing that has kept you from becoming a victim, especially if you are not always cognizant of your actions. If you have not been harassed, taunted, pushed, punched, robbed or worse, be thankful, because others, hundreds of thousands of others, have not had your luck.

"Women who appear harried or distracted are good targets," says a convicted purse snatcher. "I like to go after a woman who has little kids and a big purse. The kids distract her and the purse is easy to grab."

What can you do to be more alert and aware of your surroundings? First, know that most people become victims because they are too casual in their daily activities, too routine, too blase'. Secondly, know that you can reduce the chance of being a victim by 95 percent if you are alert and mentally prepared for danger.

"I couldn't have grabbed a single purse if my victims had been alert," says one convicted purse snatcher.

Be Like The Boy Scouts

A good Boy Scout is always prepared, and so should you be. You can wish all day you didn't have to live this way, but the reality is you do. Times necessitate your being mentally prepared so as to detect and deal with any variety of dangers that may suddenly arise.

To be prepared, you must be alert to your surroundings. If you are not, that cellular phone you carry, that chemical spray, rape whistle, pistol, and knife, won't do you any good. If you are not aware of danger until it's right in your face, you will never get the chance to reach for a weapon or take evasive action.

Drive-up
Teller

Left. - Be cautious of being so focused that you are oblivious to your surroundings.

Below. - This woman has her back to a tavern and has set her purse on the trunk of her car as she concentrates on reading the magazine.

Left. - Be alert to such situations and don't get out of the car.

The Four Stages Of Alertness

There are four stages of mental alertness, beginning with total unawareness, and escalating to the highest level of concentration and absorption in a situation. While some people instinctively fluctuate between one mental stage and another as the situation dictates, others fail to make the shift or even realize there is a need to do so.

Let's take a look at what these mental stages are and how you can make them work to keep you and your loved ones safe.

Stage One

This stage is the most dangerous because there is no awareness. A person in Stage One goes about his day not recognizing or comprehending the dangers around him. He is so caught up in his daily routine that he is oblivious to common safety sense, as though he were trusting a guardian angel to watch over him. If he even thinks about crime, it's when he thinks "it always happens to someone else."

People in Stage One leave their cameras on their dashboards, their bicycles unattended, and their car motors running as they dash into convenience stores (some even leave their babies in the car). They are the ones who walk to a dark bus stop with their purse straps dangling from their fingers, and walk from the bank counting their money. They never look ahead, behind, left or right. Even if they did, they would not recognize the dangers anyway.

Jenny decided to take her lunch break in her car. She got in without glancing in the back, spread her lunch out on the car seat, and found her place in her paperback. Suddenly an arm came over the backseat, wrapped tightly around her neck and the point of a knife touched the side of her face. The attacker then forced her to drive to a nearby wooded area where he raped her.

Stage Two

Stage Two is one of caution: there is no specific danger, but you sense a need for relaxed alertness. You would be in this stage at night as you walked to your car across an unlit parking lot, cognizant of places you couldn't see, such as behind parked cars, behind dumpsters, and into dark alleyways.

Since you have a heightened awareness of the potential for danger, you would be keenly aware of everything and everyone around you. You know what is "normal" for a given situation and therefore your attention would be drawn immediately to anything out of the norm. Your senses, in particular your vision and hearing, would be tuned to a higher level of perception as you made your way across the parking lot. You would continually look and listen, giving attention to any impressions of danger.

The convicted mugger says he always passed up women he couldn't catch off-guard. "If they were looking around, surveying their surroundings, I looked for someone else. I liked women who fumbled through their purse and paid no attention as I walked up."

Watch two veteran police officers talk on the street. They seldom look at each other because one is always looking over the other's shoulder to see who is walking up on them. It's a survival mechanism honed by years spent on the street.

Stage Three

In Stage Three, your perception of your surroundings is acute. Because you are mentally prepared, you have recognized the signs, and you are beginning to think tactically. For example:

- It's late at night and you stop at a convenience store for a quart of milk. Two gang members enter, their portable stereo blaring. One of them punches the clerk and the other grabs a case of beer. Then they see you.
- You and your date are walking to your car. As you round a

corner, you see your car door open and a man removing your stereo.

- You are in a tavern having a beer with a friend and there are two, large, drunk men shooting a noisy game of pool. When you get up to use the restroom, the biggest one steps in your path and gives you an evil grin.

In Stage Three, your senses are telling your brain that a confrontation is likely. You see the problem, sense the danger, and are aware of everything and everyone around you, all 360 degrees. You quickly check to see if there is an avenue of escape, if there are potential weapons available, and if the other people around you are friend or foe.

"One of my victims screamed and ran," says a rapist, "She would have gotten away if she would have known where she was. I knew, though. So when she ran into a dead end alley, I went right in behind her."

Another woman knew exactly where she was. When a would-be mugger approached her, she turned around and went right back into what the mugger thought was just a dance studio. But it was actually a kung-fu studio where her brother was teaching classes. After a few minutes in the studio, the mugger was grateful to see the police arrive.

Stage Four

It has begun. The you-know-what has hit the fan. The two gangsters rush you before you can leave that convenience store; the car prowler looks up and sees you, climbs out of the car and moves toward you; the drunk in the bar swings his pool cue.

In Stage Four you will be able to react instantly because you have been alert to the danger signs. You will easily flow into whatever action you choose: flee, defend or attack.

Though there was no available backup, the lone police officer *had no choice but to enter the bar where dispatch had told him three soldiers were attacking a lone male. As the officer, a karate black belt, walked up to the entrance, he mentally told himself to relax, be alert and be prepared for anything. He listened outside the door and heard lots of yelling and cursing. He closed his eyes for a moment to let his pupils dilate and adjust to darkness, then slipped through the door and stood with his back to the wall.*

Immediately a large soldier lunged at him with a wild punch. The officer blocked it easily and responded with a punch to the abdomen, dropping the man to his knees. As the second soldier attacked with a "haymaker" punch, the officer side stepped and slammed a roundhouse kick into his midsection, dropping him, too. The third soldier approached apprehensively, but the officer took no chances and sidekicked him before he could attack, knocking him backwards through a kitchen doorway.

When you have been in Stage Two or Three, you can move easily into Stage Four because you have been alert, cautious and have seen the danger signs.

Though the 105 pound woman was carrying grocery bags as she walked to her car, she was aware of two suspicious men moving her way. When they reached for her arms, she flung the bags in their faces, hit one with her purse, and ran back into the store.

A person walking about in Stage One is ripe for the picking since he is unaware of the danger around him. By the time he notices it, if he ever does, it will take him too long to make the transition from Stage One to Stage Four. It's virtually impossible for a Stage One person to gain control of a dangerous situation if he doesn't even know the situation exists.

Panic And Paralysis

Fear can cause you to react with panic and paralysis. Faced with the car prowler, you might "freeze," and be unable to respond to the threat; you might even run off and leave a loved one to face the danger alone.

There have been cases where panic and paralysis have overcome highly skilled martial artists and well-trained police officers who were caught off guard. When suddenly confronted with a dangerous situation, the Stage One mind is so taken by surprise it can't make the transition to Stage Three or Four. Gripped with shock and panic, the mind shuts down and is unable to react at all.

Be In Stage Two

In today's dangerous world, your mind should always be in Stage Two, except when in the comfort of your home and a few other places where you are free of danger. Your senses should always be activated, reaching out to detect and evaluate potential dangers. Stage Two gives you an edge and a confident demeanor that actually discourages problems.

Let's examine a situation to see how two people, a Stage One person and you, a Stage Two person, handle an angry motorist, a common situation that results in assaults and shootings everyday. The motorist feels he has been cut off, and leaps from his vehicle at the red light. The Stage One person is unaware the angry motorist has left his car until he is startled by the man shouting in his window. Dumfounded why the guy is so angry and making such terrible threats, he laboriously climbs from his car and stands directly behind his door where the angry man can easily slam it into his knees. Realizing he has forgotten his baseball hat, the Stage One man turns his back and reaches across his seat to retrieve it.

With his hat now on his pointy head, the Stage One man leans back against his car and asks the man with the beet-red face why he is so angry. This infuriates the man even more and he suddenly becomes quiet and clenches his fists; the Stage One man, however, doesn't notice. In fact, he is so oblivious to the danger of the situation, he fails to see the man's hairy, large-knuckled fist rushing toward his naive face.

Is this scenario unrealistic? No. It occurs all the time because many people fail to identify the most blatant signs of danger.

You, however, are operating throughout your day in Stage Two. Since you are aware of your surroundings, you immediately see the man in your rearview mirror get out of his car and angrily approach yours. You automatically begin thinking tactically: should you lock your doors or should you get out? Though your best option would be to lock your doors and drive off, let's say you have pulled into a parking lot and he doesn't get out until you do.

Detecting his rage, you apologize for whatever offense you committed, knowing that sometimes a quick apology, even if you are not sure what you supposedly did, will diffuse a situation. This time it doesn't.

Since his car is directly behind yours and another one is in front, there is no avenue of escape. Aware there are passing cars in the lane just inches away, you ask the man to step over to the sidewalk. Though he may construe your request as a challenge to fight, the risk of your getting run over is greater if the situation turns physical in the street.

While the man moves toward the sidewalk, you make note of his age, physical size, probable physical condition, how he carries himself, and the possibility of a concealed weapon. You also note if there is anyone else in his car, if there are passing pedestrians, and if there are any environmental objects that might be useful to you, such as mail boxes, fire hydrants, and parking meters.

As you step onto the sidewalk, you stand a little further than arm's reach from him to create just enough distance to give you more time to react. As he rants and raves, you concentrate on his eyes, though you can see his hands and feet in your peripheral vision. If he is going to choke you, he will probably look at your neck, if he is going to kick you in the groin, he will look there first. By watching his eyes, you minimize the chance he will take you by surprise.

During your entire contact with the man, you are cool, calm and in control. Often a cool demeanor in the face of a person who has lost control of his, will have a calming affect. Additionally, when you are in control of yourself, you will be better able to control someone else. But even if this technique fails, your calm mind will help you better assess events as they unfold.

Even if you were able to control him with your words and demeanor, you continue to watch him as you both return to your cars. Don't drop your guard just because it appears he has gotten control of himself. There have been many cases where confrontations appear to be over, only to have one of the participants leave and return with a gun. Remain in Stage Three until you are both back in your cars and you have turned right and he has turned left. Only then can you return to a Stage Two state of mind.

Being alert is a personal responsibility that you must incorporate into your daily routine. You must know what is going on around you, and you must have a plan as to how you will respond in the event you suddenly come face to face with a threat to your safety.

MAKE A PLAN

As well as maintaining a constant awareness of your surroundings, it's also important to have a well thought out plan as to what you are going to do in a violent or potentially violent situation. Having a plan takes the edge off the element of surprise and helps you react more smoothly.

Most people give some thought as to their day's agenda, such as which route they will drive, where they will park, which street they will walk down, which bus they will catch, and where they will have lunch. Because their day is at least loosely planned, they carry out their activities with some degree of flow. But when their routine is abruptly interrupted by a purse snatcher, mugger, rapist, or a gang shooting, they react with fear, confusion, panic, anger, and disbelief. They react poorly because they hadn't given any thought to suddenly being the object of a violent act; they hadn't made a plan.

"Any plan is better than no plan" is an axiom with much validity that is used often in the military and in police work. Here is another way to express it that applies to the issue of self-defense: if you devise a plan as to how you would react if you were suddenly in a dangerous situation, you will respond close to that plan in a real situation.

There are many ways a crime can happen and it would be impossible to plan a response for every variable. But you don't have to. If you just think about a situation in general terms, there is a far better chance you will do what is right than if hadn't thought about it at all.

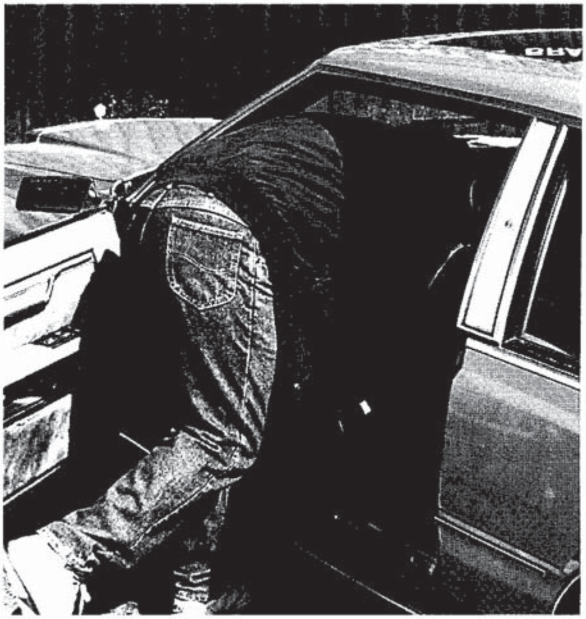
It takes very little time and effort to plan a response. To begin, think about the different areas in your life where there is a potential for problems, such as in your parking structure, at your bus stop, where you walk downtown, and when you come home late at night. To plan a response, think of what could happen in these places.

- There is a suspicious looking man standing in the shadows in your parking structure.
- While you are waiting for a bus, an unsavory looking man walks toward you.
- While shopping downtown, you see three gang members walking toward you.
- As you pull into your driveway at night, you notice the front door to your home standing open.

Using the many ideas and techniques illustrated throughout this book, you should develop a basic response for each of these very common but dangerous situations. You can add any variables pertinent to your particular situation.

Let's try it using your bus stop with that unsavory person walking toward you.

- Your plan is to always be aware of your surroundings, all 360 degrees. Remember, it's rather difficult to react to a threat if you are not even aware of it.
- If the person walks toward you on your right side, your plan is to switch your purse, brief case, or packages to your left hand.
- If you normally carry chemical spray, you plan to have it in your free hand.
- If there is a telephone pole, street sign or fire plug, you are going to move to the other side so there is something between you and the threat.



Left. - You see this as return to your car. What is your plan?

Right. - If you were already aware of the sign, you could quickly position yourself so it will be between you and the threat, thus giving you time and space to react.

PARKING
ONLY

- If the person begins to verbally harass you, your plan is to go to the open mini-grocery across the street.
- In spite of the measures you have taken thus far, let's say he walks up to you and demands your money. If he doesn't show a weapon, your plan is to spray him and run. If you don't have spray or he threatens with a weapon, your plan is to toss your money, wallet or purse in one direction then run in the other.

That's about it. You can add or subtract any variables depending on the particulars of your situation. Go through the plan several times in your mind, especially while at the bus stop. In the event you are accosted, your reaction will be somewhat programmed and therefore smoother than if you were to try to think and respond under the influence of shock and surprise.

It's easy to make a similar plan for all the areas in your life where there is a likelihood you could be victimized. There is nothing complicated about the planning process nor should you make the responses complicated. Think of it this way: responding to a threat is a form of fighting back and fighting should never be complicated.

When an assailant attacks you in whatever form, he has the element of surprise in his favor. You may still be surprised and shocked when suddenly confronted by someone who wants to hurt you or take from you, but when you have thought about the possibility of it happening and planned a basic response, your reaction will be more polished and less likely to get you hurt.

To repeat what has been said earlier, your safety is your responsibility. Never sit back comfortably on the false belief that you will be OK because as you shall see in the next section, you should never count on others to come to your aid.

YOU CAN'T ALWAYS COUNT ON WITNESSES

It's been nearly three decades since 38 people in New York city stood by without helping or even calling the police as a woman named Kitty Genovese was stabbed to death. The case is still discussed today as a glaring example of people not helping people. But there have been other cases.

In December of 1993, a young woman in Trenton, New Jersey was kidnapped from a private club. After the kidnapper pushed the hysterical woman into his car, a motorist pulled over to let him leave the lot. When the kidnapper returned to the club to get his bicycle, a passerby stepped over to his car to investigate screams coming from the trunk, but walked quickly away. Later, the kidnapper shot the woman to death, then buried her in an empty lot. As in the Kitty Genovese murder, no one called the police during the incident, or even came forward later to talk with them.

Every year one or two blatant cases of witness' apathy are reported in the press and discussed on talk shows. Thousands of pages have been written on the phenomena by psychologists, many of whom have spent years researching why it happens.

It's not our purpose here to examine the many reasons why people refuse to help others, but it's important to know and keep in mind that many times good people will choose not to get involved, no matter how overt and brazen a situation. In fact, sometimes the more witnesses there are, the greater the chance no one will come forward.

On the other hand, there are people who will get involved, sometimes at great risk to their own lives. For example, dozens of people risked life and limb to help rescue others during the World Trade Center bombing in New York. Jetliner crashes often bring out the best of people helping people.

The bottom line is you don't know what people are going to do so you need to always think and act as if you are on your own. You need to take responsibility for your own safety.

Should You Get Involved?

When you witness something happening, it's important to know that you will be under the same psychological influences that effect everyone else. You may feel an urge to do something, but there may be stronger forces holding you back. Here are a few ways you can overcome these forces.

- Keep an open, objective mind as to whether or not you are really needed. Know that your mind may play tricks and interpret the situation as less serious than it really is.
- If the situation is not clear, ask if your help is needed. Be aware that if the answer is yes, you will feel that you should do something. If the answer is no, or for some reason you can't ask, you will have to rely on your gut instinct to decide what to do.
- Accept that it's OK to be wrong in your decision. Most bystanders fail to take action because they are afraid of being embarrassed by being wrong. You just might be, but on the other hand, you might be right and save someone's life.
- Sometimes a loud "Stop!" will stop an incident because

> the suspect has been made aware that his actions are being witnessed. If your judgement call was wrong, you will probably get an explanation. If you are right, your shout may save someone.

We are all in this life together. Most of us want to live peacefully, go to work, enjoy our families and strive for personal success. But there are people out there who are predators, who want to take what is ours and hurt us just for pleasure and power. There is something terribly wrong with standing by as these predators prey on others.

PART TWO

HOME AND NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY

BURGLARY

The minute they pulled into their driveway, Sam and Barbara knew something was wrong. They said later that they both had a "feeling" something was wrong with their house. Then as they approached the front door, their worse fears were confirmed: the door was ajar and had been splintered. Their home had been burglarized.

Barbara gripped Sam's arm as they made their way slowly through each room of their home. The living room had been ransacked: the television and Sam's coin collection was gone, and two of Barbara's priceless antique dolls had been thrown into the fish tank. Unreadable graffiti had been spray painted onto the living room wall and over several family photographs.

The three bedrooms had been ransacked, clothes and personal items tossed about, dresser drawers pulled onto the floor, and the contents of closets strewn about. Even their children's rooms had been violated: toys, stuffed animals and clothing had been handled. Barbara's sewing room was a shambles and her sewing machine was gone. All of the books in the den had been pulled from their shelves, artifacts they had brought back from China had been broken, and Sam's favorite leather recliner had been shredded with some kind of cutting instrument.

Barbara called 911 to report the incident, then she and Sam went out to the porch to sit, wait for the police, and cry.

There is nothing unusual about Sam's and Barbara's burglary. In fact, over four million other families experience the same thing every year in the United States—a conservative estimate since Justice Department surveys suggest that more than half of all burglaries go unreported.

Just as bad as the loss of personal possessions is the psychological impact on the victim families.

"I couldn't even stay in the house for several days," Barbara says. "When Sam was at work, I stayed with friends."

Sam immediately went out and spent hundreds of dollars on double locks, window bars, motion detector lights and an alarm system. "We look at everyone in the neighborhood differently, now," he says. "Who would have thought it could happen to us, and in this nice neighborhood."

Burglars also steal their victim's peace of mind. Everything their home represents—safety, peace, quiet, love, sanctuary, refuge from the outside world—all comes crumbling down when burglars penetrate. There is a sense of personal violation when thieves enter this private domain and touch personal, cherished belongings. One victim called her feelings, "psychological rape". And the psyche heals slowly.

Though most people think home burglaries happen at night, the truth is that 60 percent occur during the hours of daylight when people are at work and at school. Especially alarming is that in 13 percent of all residential burglaries, thieves encounter someone in the home. A third of those encounters result in the victim being assaulted and/or raped.

How Burglars Choose A Home

Crime prevention experts say that in 95 percent of burglaries the homes are cased first. This may involve no more than walking by the house the day before, or driving through the neighborhood to note potential easy targets. Polished, professional burglars, who make up a small percentage overall, may case targets by jogging through neighborhoods, or knock on doors, acting as salespersons or fund raisers. But in 25 percent of the cases, the suspect was a neighborhood teenager.

Just as there are many burglars, there are many ways they choose their targets. Some burglarize only affluent neighborhoods, some favor middle class homes, and others, who live in poorer sections of their communities, burglarize homes within walking distance. Most often they choose homes where they think there might be VCRs, stereos, TVs, jewelry, cash, and guns.

Some burglars tell police they look for houses where the position of trees, shrubbery, garages or anything else, prevents neighbors from seeing them work. Other thieves cruise a neighborhood looking for empty garages, unmowed lawns, uncollected newspapers, mail, and empty recycle bins left at the curb.

Some burglars look for expensive items in windows. They may not be impressed with your bowling trophies displayed on the sill, but they like to see computers, VCRs and portable televisions through the front picture windows. If you got it, don't flaunt it. Homes in obvious disrepair are often targets. Burglars figure if the house looks a little rundown, the owner probably has not made the effort of making it secure. So if you buy a fixer upper, fix the outside first to make it look cared for and secure.

In a study of Philadelphia suburbs, it was found that burglars struck 40 percent more often within three blocks of major thoroughfares, to take advantage of close escape routes. Nationwide, studies show that four out of ten burglaries occur at corner homes, providing thieves with at least three escape routes.

Breaking into a home is most often a crime of opportunity, committed by young, inexperienced males looking for easy and fast entry. They look for an unlocked window or a flimsy, easy-to-force door. But 45 percent of burglars find that victims make it easy for them because they leave their doors and windows unlocked, sometimes open.

There are many burglars who are not at all sophisticated as to how they choose a home. Dope addicts, desperate for their next fix, give little or no thought as to how they select their victims. They will break into single-family houses, apartments, condos, and boathouses. They will steal from your downtown apartment, your suburban split-level, and your rural house with the country view. It doesn't matter what kind of a dwelling you live in or where it is situated.

Crime Of Opportunity

Here are a few things people do that helps the burglar do his crime.

- Hiding a key under the mat. What an original idea. A burglar will never think of that, right? Wrong. They find keys under mats, flower pots, window ledges, loose bricks, mailboxes, all the places people believe are clever hiding places. One family hid a key in a tree fifty yards from their home, and through they told no one of its existence, a burglar used it to get in their door. Leave your extra key with a trusted neighbor.

- Burglars look for a note on the door to inform friends and family they have left. Sometimes people leave revealing notes, such as, "11:10. I've gone to the store. Be back in thirty minutes. Go on in, the door is unlocked." Don't leave a note, not even a cryptic one. It will not fool a burglar, even if he can't figure out what the note says. After all, would you leave a note on the door if you were home?

- People who put their names on their house or mailbox. Sure, you are proud of your home and your family, but don't put your name over the door. And since the mailperson usually refers to the address on your mail, there is no need to put your name on the mailbox either. Burglars see your name and address on your house, look it up in the phone book, then call you. If you don't answer, they burglarize your home.

- A ringing telephone. The burglar who uses this technique will dial your phone from nearby. When it keeps ringing, he assumes there is no one home. Some burglars let the phone continue ringing as they enter your home, feeling safe as long as they can hear it. Get an answering machine and leave a message saying, "We can't come to the phone right now..." Never leave a message saying you are not at home.

- A ladder left against the side of your house is an invitation for a burglar to gain access to high windows or a second story level. Other objects left against the side of the house, such as old tires, boxes, trash and so on, make it easy to get in. Keep the ladder in the garage and keep the sides of your home clear.

The Burglary Business

The average take of personal property in a home burglary is $1,000; nationwide, burglars' annual take adds up to 3.4 billion dollars. Burglars will keep your cash, but your jewelry, even that rare, sentimental piece grandmother gave you, will end up scattered all over town in pawn shops and unscrupulous jewelry stores. Teenage burglars from the neighborhood will keep some of the goods, then sell what they don't want. Some burglars work with a fence, selling stolen property for a small percentage of the value, or trading it for drugs. Many fences are drug dealers who have another fence to sell to or trade with. Sometimes your property ends up out of state and even out of the country.

Burglars will sell your 19 inch television for $75-$100 dollars if it's in good shape. Your VCR will bring about $100. Since guns are a valuable commodity, they sell easily on the street. Your .38 revolver will not get much more than $30, while your 9mm, semi-automatic will bring $150.

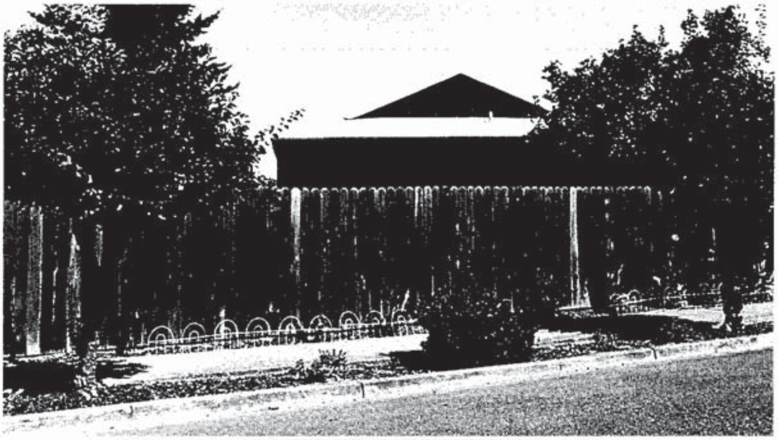
Make Your Home Visible

Before we examine what you can do to your house structurally, let's take a look at some simple and inexpensive ways to tighten the security of your home.

Though you may want privacy, you need to be selective as to shrubbery and fences. That big hedge that prevents the neighbors from seeing you sunbathe nude in the backyard, also keeps them from seeing a burglar crawl in a window. The solid fence

Left. - A burglar may not have considered this house until he saw the ladder conveniently left under a window.

Below. - This fence offers lots of privacy but neither the neighbors or a passing car can see a burglar climbing through a side window.



Left. - A wire fence keeps the dog in and allows others a view of the vulnerable windows.

that gives you so much privacy for your patio barbecues, keeps the neighbors and a passing patrol car from seeing a burglar kick in your sliding glass door.

"High walls and high hedges protect me from being seen," says one active burglar.

So that neighbors and passing police can see those places where burglars typically enter, your yard greenery should be kept low, usually no more than two feet high, or low enough so as not to cover a window or entryway. Fences should either be of the heavy wire type, or if wood, designed to allow visibility.

Whether you should design your greenery and fencing to allow visibility is often a difficult choice. You would like to have privacy, but you would also like an observant neighbor to call 911 when a burglar is seen going through your side window. It's your choice.

When You Go On Vacation

Vacationers are favorite targets of burglars, and August is their month to prowl. Thieves will cruise neighborhoods looking for signs that people are on vacation: unmowed lawns, empty garages, uncollected newspapers and overflowing mail boxes. Your best bet is to get someone to housesit for you. If you can't, there are other things you can do to increase the security of your home while you are gone.

- Inform the police, especially the beat car in your neighborhood, that you are going to be gone.
- Tell trusted neighbors when you are leaving and when you are coming back. Give them a key so they can get in to turn lights on in the evening and off in the morning. Ask them to put out the trash can on pickup days and to collect your newspapers and mail. Tell your newspaper person to stop delivery, but know that newspaper carriers have been arrested for early morning burglaries and car break-ins.

- Have your lawn mowed by someone you can trust to know you are out of town. Get them to water it, too. If you are gone in the winter, have someone shovel snow off your walk or at least make fresh footprints up to your front door.
- Get your neighbors to park their extra cars in your driveway so it looks as if someone is at home.
- Use at least two timers and set them to turn on lights and a radio at various times.
- Lock your garage since it's most often a weak entry point. Make sure the little door is locked and the slide bolts on the big door are activated.
- Call forwarding will fool a burglar into thinking you are home.
- Never leave a message on your answering machine that says you will be out of town for two weeks. And turn down the volume on the phone so the ringing can't be heard from outside.

Your home is your castle but you don't have to live in a fortress. You do, however, need to evaluate your home as to the best ways to secure it and to detect weakness and problem areas. There may be costs involved, so you need to weigh the cost against the repercussion of lost possessions and loss of your family's sense of security.

Doors, Windows And Lighting

Burglars enter through doors more than any other entry point and they love it when home owners leave them unlocked, which they do 70 percent of the time. Burglars also love rickety, flimsy doors that lets them get in with a minimum of effort and noise. Weak doors usually take only one kick to force open, and about two seconds of time. Crime prevention experts say that if you can delay a burglar for 90 seconds, he will give up.

Typical Problem doors—Your front door is probably the strongest, but its light-weight construction and single bolt, makes it a one-kick, possibly a two-kick door. That side basement and small garage door are thin, flimsy, and usually secured by a sliding latch, making it a one-kick door. Oh yes, many of the little pet doors that lets Fifi come and go as she likes, are big enough for a small child to crawl through to unlock the door for the bigger burglar.

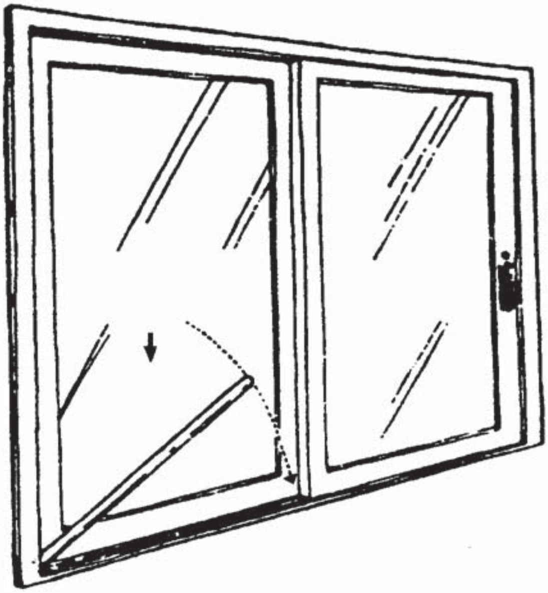
Sliding glass doors are commonly locked with a light-metal latch which even the weakest burglars can open with a tug. Even if the metal is strong, sliding glass door are normally in the back or side of the house, allowing burglars the luxury of taking lots of time to work.

Solutions. Get metal or solid-core, hardwood doors for the front, garage, basement and back doors. They should be 1 3/4 inches thick, fit tightly and have hinges on the inside so a burglar can't remove the hinge pins from the outside. The doorjamb should have a good metal strike-plate, held in place by four, three-inch screws. Install single-cylinder dead-bolt locks with one-inch bolts, which can be locked on the outside with a key and inside with a thumb knob. Doors that would never be used in an emergency, such as a fire, should have double-cylinder dead bolts that lock on both sides with a key. For safety, hang the key close to the door but out of sight of a burglar.

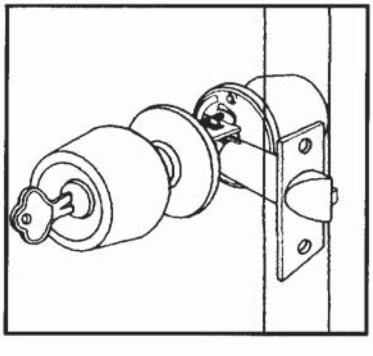
A sliding glass door can be made more secure with a sturdy length of wooden dowel laid in the track to prevent the door from opening. Next, twist a screw into the top of the door about two inches from the open end and angle it in to a point where the door can just barely close. Now the door cannot be removed by lifting it from its track.

Securing Windows

Breaking windows is noisy, so some burglars put masking tape on the glass or cover a window with a towel to suppress the noise. Most burglars, however, avoid breaking glass because of its distinctive sound. Prying the window is much quieter and, unless the window has been reinforced, much easier.

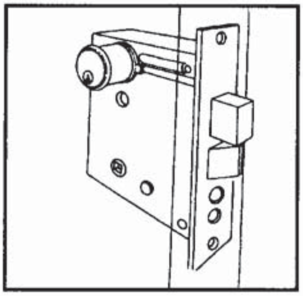


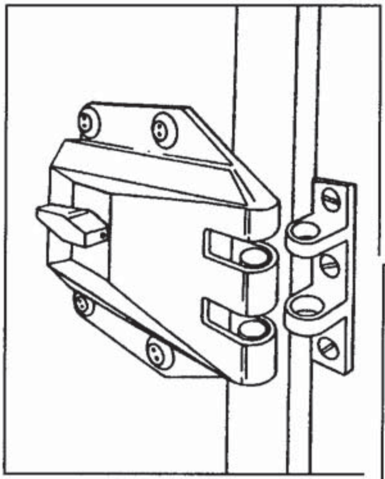
Above. - A wooden dowel laid in the track of your sliding glass door is the best security measure you can buy for under $5.



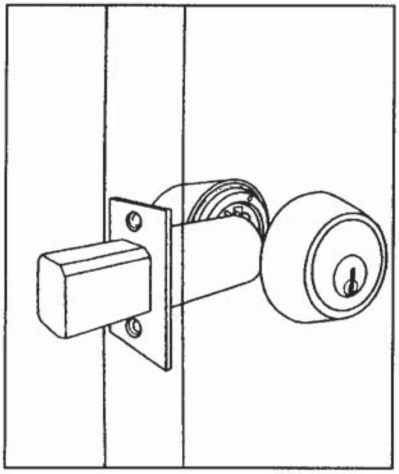
Above. - The key-in-knob lock is still common even in new houses although a burglar can easily knock it off with a hammer or heavy wrench.

Below. - This common lock is much less effective than it looks. It can be easily picked and it's configuration may weaken some doors.

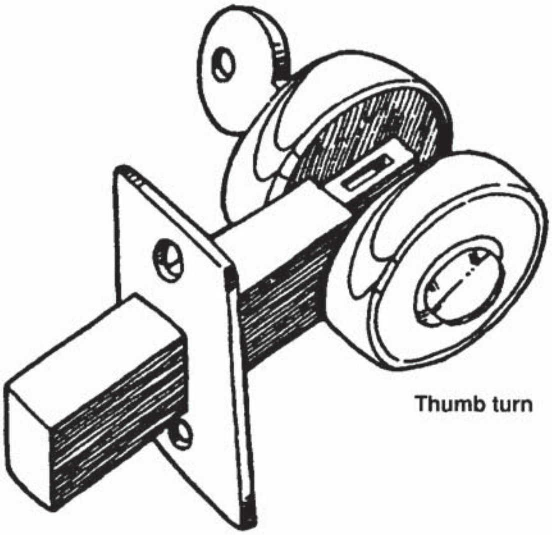




Left. - The surface-mounted dead bolt is easy to install. Its bolt can be vertical, horizontal or both. This one has a thumb turn on the inside while there are others models that have double cylinders, necessitating a key for both sides.



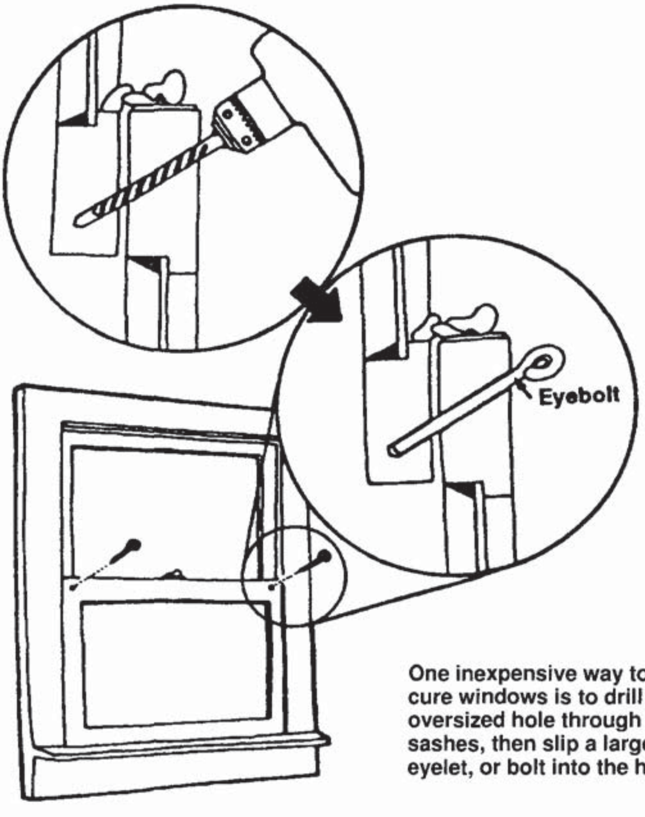
Right. - This cylinder deadbolt is compact and protrudes only a little from the door. It comes in single and double cylinders. A double cylinder deadbolt lock requires a key for both the outside and inside. Most crime prevention experts don't recommend them because of potential risk in case of fire. If you have any installed, ensure that all family members know where the key is located.



Right. - A single cylinder horizontal deadbolt lock requires a key for the outside and has a thumb turn on the inside. The steel should be case hardened so it can't be sawed by a burglar.

The standard double-hung windows are the easiest to force open because of their near useless thumb-turn locks. The best way to secure this type of window is to first close it, then drill a hole at each corner, slanting downward through the top of the lower frame and partially into the bottom of the upper frame. Now insert a big nail or an eye bolt into the hole which is big enough to let you pull the nail in and out. When the nail is in, the windows are immobilized.

For you fresh air buffs, raise the bottom window a few inches, stick the drill into the holes that already exist in the bottom window, and drill two more short holes into the top window frame. Use the same nails to pin the bottom window open, thus letting in fresh breezes but preventing a burglar from opening the window further.



One inexpensive way to secure windows is to drill an oversized hole through both sashes, then slip a large nail, eyelet, or bolt into the hole.

Basement windows are a favorite entry point for burglars. They are usually located on the sides or back of houses and are frequently concealed from view by shrubbery or fences. Window bars are an excellent form of good physical and visual security. Window frames can also be screwed shut permanently, but if the glass is big enough, a burglar can break it out and crawl through.

Be careful about putting bars on upper floor windows because they prevent you from getting out in case of fire or some other emergency.

Windows deemed to be an especially high security risk—small panes in a door near the inside doorknob or lock, windows at the back or side of the house which could easily be broken—can be replaced with Lexan or Plexiglas, a see-through glass-like unbreakable material.

Lighting

Besides Mrs. Henracker, your nosey neighbor, lighting is one of your best deterrents to burglars. You want your neighbors and the neighborhood patrol car to be able to see as much of your house as possible, front, sides and back. One method to determine if you have sufficient light is to circle the outside of your house at night, stopping every few feet to look at your watch. If there is a place where you can't see the dial, that's where you need light. For sure you want to light all entry points, especially back doors. The corner by the fence where you keep the garbage can—where an intruder can hide in the shadows—should also be lit.

Consider mounting floodlights at each corner of the house, then cover them with a wire mesh so a burglar or a vandal can't break the bulb. Electrical wires should be high enough so as not to be cut.

A man and wife returned home one evening to find a note threatening to kill them pinned to their front door. When the husband surveyed the house, he found the exterior lights broken out and the telephone lines cut.

Consider installing motion detector lighting at the front and rear of the house so they will automatically turn on when someone enters within their range. A more expensive option are sodium-vapor lamps that light up automatically when the sun goes down, then turn off at dawn.

What To Do When A Break-in Happens

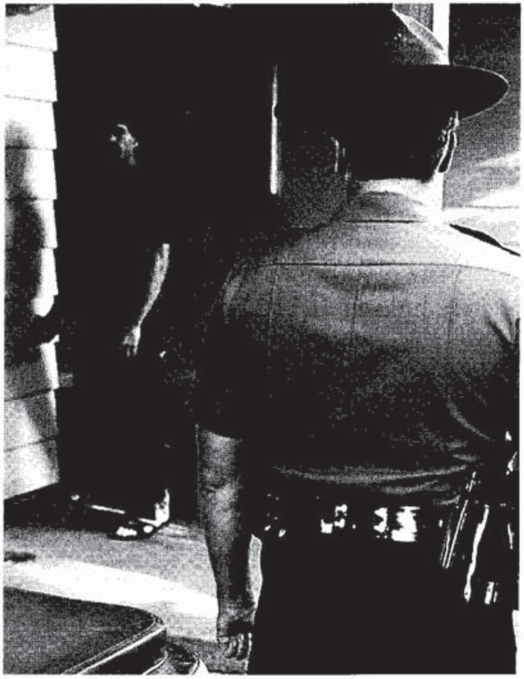
No matter what precautions you take, there is still a possibility your home may be burglarized. For your own safety and to help the police, there are definite things you need to do.

Don't go in unless you are absolutely convinced the burglar is gone. If there is no way to be sure, play it safe and go to a neighbor's house to call 911. Tell the police you will be waiting at the neighbor's, or you will be standing across the street from your house. Don't go into your backyard and look around. You may run into the burglar or the police might mistake you for the bad guy.

Responding to a burglary call, the officer rounded the back corner of the duplex and came face to face with a man holding a gun. The officer instantly drew his gun and shouted at the man to drop his and lay on the ground. The man held onto his weapon and tried to speak, but the officer, who later said he was a hairbreadth away from pulling his trigger, shouted again at him to lay down, which he finally did. After the officer had gotten his gun and checked his identification, he learned he was the homeowner.

The officer, responding to a burglary alarm call, rounded the back corner of the house as a man walked out the back door. The man saw the officer and quickly identified himself as the homeowner. They talked for a moment about the alarm system, then the man offered to show the officer inside. As they began to enter, the man suddenly pulled a gun from his waist and attempted to shoot. The surprised officer struggled briefly with the man before he was able to draw his service weapon and shoot him fatally. The man turned out to be the burglar.

Left. - This woman has come home to find her home burglarized. She should not go in.



Right. - How would you like to be this officer and have to decide if the man is an armed burglar or an armed homeowner?

When you do go into your house, don't touch anything. The police may determine there are good surfaces to check for fingerprints, although unlike in the movies, usable prints are found in less than 2 percent of burglary cases.

Tell the officers of any big items missing, then ask if you can mail them a more complete list later after you have had more time to inventory for smaller things. Know that the shock of having your home invaded can make it difficult to determine your loss.

If there is vandalism, take photos. Create a file of the complete police report and photos and take them to your insurance agent.

One frightening statistic shows that 500,000 burglaries happen every year when the home owners are in the house. Sometimes the burglar knows there are people present, other times the home owner's presence catches the burglar by surprise, resulting in a hostage situation, rape, assault and murder. Sometimes the burglars are shot by the home owner.

If you wake up and hear a burglar in your home, avoid confrontation. Keep in mind that most burglars are going to be nervous and want to avoid detection. If you go to him, or them, and force a confrontation, they most likely will fight. And if they brought a firearm, or have stolen yours, things could get ugly.

Your best plan is to get your family out of the house fast. If that's impossible, get everyone in one room and stay there. Call 911 immediately, tell them there is a burglar in your house and you are held up in the northwest corner bedroom.

If the worst of the worst happens, and you wake up to see a burglar in your bedroom, pretend to stay asleep. Statistics show he will not attack if he thinks he is not being detected. Some cat burglars only want the thrill of taking your possessions out from under your nose as you sleep. Let them have their thrill, so you can survive to tell the tale to your psychiatrist.

(We will get into a more detailed explanation as to how to defend your home later)

Home Alarms

A good alarm system, in conjunction with good locks, lighting and other safeguards discussed in this chapter, is probably the best step you can take to reduce the chance of burglars breaking into your home. Happily, few thieves possess knowledge of how to disable an electronic system, or would ever take the time to try.

Burglars say they won't go to a home that has window stickers or a yard sign that proclaims the home to be alarmed. As one burglar stated, "Why should I when there are so many houses that don't have systems?" He's right: nine out of ten American homes are not alarmed.

The least expensive systems run 200 - 400 dollars, the most expensive costs over 20,000 dollars. The simplest systems sound an alarm outside the house, while the more complex and expensive systems send a signal to the police station or a central monitoring station, which costs a monthly fee of 20 - 30 dollars. The monitoring station will then call you to make sure it's not a false alarm, then phones the police.

Most alarms use a magnetic system that cost 50 - 100 dollars per each door or window protected. Some homeowners choose to put sensors only on the doors, then place an infrared motion detector in a central location, such as a hallway.

Warning—Keep in mind that alarm companies are in the business of selling you their equipment. Though most companies are honest and offer a quality product, there are others who will pressure you to buy more than you want or need. They quote frightening crime statistics and tell you every window and door should be alarmed. It's wise to have at least three reputable alarm companies estimate your needs.

Some companies have been accused of doing a poor job of monitoring and other unscrupulous security companies have gone out of business, taking their monitoring stations with them as well as their clients' money. Check their references. A company that has been in business for a long time is always a good sign.

Make sure the alarm company's monitoring station operates

24 hours a day and has a standby battery for power failures. Check to see if their equipment has UL (Underwriters Laboratories) approval.

Choosing An Alarm System

There are several considerations you need to think about once you have decided to invest in an alarm system, such as your financial situation, your life-style habits, and the particulars you need in an alarm.

- How much money do you want to spend on a system? There are relatively inexpensive, bare bones ones and there are elaborate, complex systems costing thousands of dollars. You also need to decide if you want to buy or just lease.
- How many break-in points does your house have? The more you have, the costlier your system will be if you want to alarm each one. But if you have just one, say the door to your 15th story apartment, you may be wiser to invest in a good locking system.
- Who will be operating your alarm? If electronic equipment confuses you, you may want to get a system that is simple to operate. If your system will be operated by two adults and a twelve-year-old child, choose one simple enough for the child to understand.
- How will an audible alarm be received by your neighbors? If a siren is activated at your home, will the neighbor you have been feuding with for years even call 911? Do you live in close proximity to others who will be angered by your false alarms?
- One of the more important considerations is how reputable is the alarm company? As mentioned earlier, be cognizant of unscrupulous salespersons who try to sell you more alarm features than you need. Will they install an alarm today, give you lots of promises, then disappear tomorrow?

Call the Better Business Bureau to see if any complaints have been filed against the company.

- Does the system come with any warranties? If so, how long do they last? Do they cover parts and labor? How expensive are the average repair jobs after the warranty expires?
- How easy is the system to operate? Are the instructions easy to follow? You don't want a complicated system to operate, especially if you are trying to do so under stress.
- Can additional features be added to the basic system to reduce the chance it will be defeated by a smart burglar? Call your police department's burglary detectives to see if burglars ever defeat alarms in your area; if so, how do they do it?
- How long do you have to wait for service? Since the company might tell you one thing but do another, ask for references.
- Does the system have an emergency back-up battery? How long will it last after an AC power loss?
- How will you be notified if the system breaks down? How long does it usually take for notification? How long do malfunctions last?

False Alarms

Your alarm system links you to an emergency response system that when triggered will get one or more police cars dispatched to your home. False alarms, usually caused by homeowner carelessness, wastes valuable police time, taking officers away from valid emergencies and exposing them to needless risk as they hurry to your "emergency."

Many cities are now imposing heavy fines on homeowners for their false alarms. In the same way traffic tickets get motorists to look at their driving, one or two false-alarm fines impels the homeowner to do something about false alarms.

Here are some of the most common ways homeowners cause false alarms and some simple things you can do to prevent them.

- Homeowner forgetfulness is probably one of the leading causes of false alarms. The owner comes home, tired from a long day at work, or distracted by other concerns, walks through the door, oblivious to the fact the alarm was just tripped. A few minutes later, to his embarrassment, he finds police officers in his front and back yard—police officers who find no humor in responding to false alarms.

  To prevent accidentally setting off your system, use some kind of creative reminder to help you remember your house is alarmed. For example, put a decoration of some kind by the key hole to remind you the alarm is on.

- Pets, especially cats and dogs, left alone in a house will wander about and set off an alarm. Every police officer can tell stories of peering through a window on an alarm call and seeing a Fido or a Fifi strolling across a living room carpet.

  To prevent this from happening, make it a rule never to leave a pet inside when the alarm is set. Put a picture of your dog or your canary by the door or by the alarm box to help you remember.

- Open windows, which you should not be leaving open when you leave your house anyway, allow in wind currents which move things — plants, curtains, loose sheets of paper — across your alarm beam.

  The best prevention is to develop a habit of always closing your windows when you leave. This is especially important if you occasionally forget to set your alarm.

- Mail slots which are within your alarm beam, may be triggered when the mail drops through. Test the alarm when it's first installed to ensure the mail drop is not in the beam.

- Floating balloons will eventually drift across your alarm beam. Though you may not always be aware of it, there are subtle air currents moving about your house strong enough to carry a light balloon from, say, your child's upstairs bedroom to your downstairs living room, then across your invisible alarm beam.

  To prevent this problem, keep party balloons in a room which is not alarmed, then shut the door to close them in.

- Open interior doors are also susceptible to moving air currents. Whether they move from air currents, a shifting of the house, or some other-world spirit, open doors will often move enough to cross an alarm beam.

  The best prevention is to make sure your interior doors are shut before you activate your alarm.

- People, without a doubt, set off the most false alarms. To prevent people from setting off false alarms, ensure that family members, relatives, friends, neighbors, domestic help, and repair persons, know how your system works. Far too much valuable police time is wasted responding to alarm calls where legitimate people have entered a home but are unfamiliar with the alarm's operation.

Keeping Your Alarm System In Shape

The following maintenance steps will help prevent false alarms and ensure your alarm is reliable.

- Replace the main battery to your system every three to five years. Check with your dealer for more details.
- Test your alarm every month to make sure it's in good working order.
- Routine periodic checks by your alarm company are important.

- Inform your alarm company of any changes you have made in the structure of your home. Always let them know if you have acquired a new cat or dog.
- Ask your alarm company what are the most common mistakes people make when operating the system you are using.

Barking Dog Alarm

Even a little rat-like, lap dog can be a deterrent to burglars if it puts up a raucous fuss. But if you don't like dogs, or your apartment manager doesn't allow them, get an audio tape of a barking dog and connect it to your doorbell. When the bell rings, the tape starts. Burglars who like to ring the doorbell to see if anyone is home will be discouraged to go further.

You can also buy a big dog dish and leave it on the front steps. Smear a little dog food in it and paint your imaginary dog's name on the side: "KILLER."

An alarm system is one of the best defenses against burglars. It pays to learn as much as you can about them, then shop for the best system for your specific needs. Once the alarm is in place, make every effort not to have a false alarm.

NEIGHBORHOOD WATCH

That nosey neighbor who is always peering through her blinds is actually a form of the neighborhood watch concept. But you can go much further and enlist the efforts of everyone in your neighborhood to keep an eye out for suspicious activity. About 19 million people throughout the country are organized into watch programs in an effort to create a safer environment in their neighborhoods.

Neighborhood watch organizations teach people how to observe and report crimes. They also help foster a common bond among neighbors, giving them a sense of community, a feeling of pride and respect for their neighborhood, all of which creates a positive sense of well being, lower crime rates, and higher property values. It's easy to start a neighborhood watch group in your neighborhood. First contact your local police department—most sponsor a neighborhood watch program—and ask for their help. Request a date and time for an officer to meet with your group.

Send fliers around your neighborhood announcing the date, time and location of your first meeting, then about a week before, either send out more fliers, or make door to door contact to encourage people to come.

At the meeting, listen to the officer's suggestions as to how to make your homes and neighborhood safer. Learn what is considered suspicious activity and find out the best and the fastest way to report it to the police. Discuss as a group how you will look out for each other. Make a map of your neighborhood with every participant's phone number by their house so that you can have a phone tree to contact one another regarding future meetings, emergencies, and to just make new friends.

Contact these addresses for more detailed information on how to start a neighborhood watch where you live.

The National Sheriffs' Association
1450 Duke St
Alexandria, VA 22314-3490

The National Crime Prevention Council
Dept. F-1
1700 K St NW, 2nd Fl
Washington, DC 20006-3817

MAKING YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD SAFE FOR KIDS

It goes without saying that our children are our most precious commodity. As loving parents, we will do anything to make their lives safe and secure. But in spite of our efforts, it seems that now, more than ever before, children are becoming victims of crimes. Look at the daily news and you can easily see that terrible crimes to children occur anywhere at anytime, even in the most seemingly safe environments.

A twelve-year-old sixth grader was in her school hallway putting books in her locker when a man stepped up behind her. He took her by the arm and mumbled only three words: "Come with me." Too frightened to resist, she left with the stranger, walking with him along the crowded halls, out the door, across a busy street, and into a motel room where she was brutally raped. Later, when the man had fallen asleep, the girl was able to crawl out a back window and make her way back to the school. The suspect was subsequently apprehended.

The absolute brazenness of the rapist in the above situation, shocked family, neighbors and authorities. "Is there no place for our children to be safe," they cried. Indeed, if a predator will simply walk into a busy school, pluck a young girl out of a crowd of children and teachers, how safe are our children when they are a block away playing in a park? How can we protect them and teach them safety measures without creating a sense of anxiety, paranoia and fear?

There are good techniques for teaching children safety while at the same time not scaring them to death, but that is only half of what you need to do. You also need to take measures to ensure that your neighborhood is as safe as you can possibly make it, and you don't have to do it alone. By working collectively with other parents, neighborhood organizations and the police, you can be a strong, driving force to make positive change in your neighborhood. The same successful techniques used by neighborhood watch groups can be used to make your neighborhood a safer place for your children.

First, know that educating your children about safety is critical. Studies show that when children understand good, basic safety information, there is a 90 percent less chance they will be victimized.

Let's take a look at some ways to empower children to be safety conscious.

Teach Your Children To Feel Good About Themselves

Children who have been belittled, criticized and made to feel worthless and incapable, will act that way when they are away from home. Their posture, attitude and demeanor will convey uncertainty and a lack of confidence. Predators of young children specifically select the weaker looking ones over those who appear confident and self-assured.

Conversely, children raised with positive reinforcement that they have value and are special and capable, will carry themselves with greater self-assurance, be more alert, and be quicker to respond when trouble arises.

Children should know that what they learn will make them part of a safety network of people—family, neighbors, teachers, police—who are working to make their neighborhood a safe place. This will give them a sense of togetherness in their safety consciousness, rather than thinking they are out there trying to avoid evil strangers all by themselves.

Guidelines For Talking To Children About Crime

Children get a mixed message when you tell them not to talk to strangers, yet you talk with people in the grocery line, at the post office and at the bank. It's better to stress safe behavior with strangers, such as don't get in a car with them; don't take anything from them; don't let them touch you; and don't follow them anywhere. This gives children some flexibility over a situation rather than just telling them to never talk to people.

Talk To Your Children About Television

The impact of television violence is still being debated, but there is no question children are affected by what they see on the tube. The difference between fantasy and reality can be confusing to some children and many are hurt and killed every year emulating TV programs.

Since you can't completely control what your children see, it's important to diffuse some of the things they have seen. For example, tell them Superman is just a regular man, an actor, who only looks like he is flying because television people use special wires and special cameras. Unnecessary you say? Know that children have been hurt, some killed, leaping off roof tops trying to fly like Superman.

Tell them horror movies are scary because of the music, lighting, and the actor's special makeup. Without any of that, what they see would be silly.

If they see police dramas, explain that the actors are not really shot and the blood is only pretend. Tell them that when the camera stops, the actors get up, go home and see their families. In fact, they will probably be on another program next week. Then emphasize that a real gun—like the one you have—will really kill someone. Don't soft pedal this message. It's imperative that children know that real guns can kill.

A seven-year-old boy named Sam brought a .357 handgun to school to "scare" Jason, another seven-year-old he had been arguing with. He first brandished the loaded weapon on the crowded playground so his friends could see it, then he ap-

proached Jason, gun at the ready. Luckily a teacher intervened and the gun was taken away from him. Later, Sam told the police he had gotten the gun from under his parent's mattress.

Children Are Going To Break The Rules

In spite of the many times you tell your child not to ride his bicycle to the park by himself, he will probably do it at least once. How you react when a safety rule is broken is important. If you discuss the situation calmly as to why the rule was established in the first place, and tell him what the risk was when it was violated, he will not only have a greater understanding of the rule, but he will be more comfortable telling you if he breaks it again.

The eleven year old boy was told he could never ride his bicycle to the corner convenience store by himself. One noon hour, unbeknown to his parents, he rode to the store and bought a candy bar. That evening, while watching the five o'clock news, the family learned the clerk at the store had been shot twice during an early afternoon robbery. Frightened, the boy admitted he had gone to the store. The parents, upset he had been so close to the violence, but glad he had admitted his actions, talked with him about why they had the rule. Due to their calm demeanor, and the supportive news story, the boy never broke that rule again.

Teach Them But Don't Scare Them

You can start teaching your children safety rules the moment they are old enough to understand. For some children that may be at the age of three, for others it might be five. You want to start as young as possible so the rule becomes part of their ingrained behavior.

The trick is to teach children to be safe without making them fearful of everyone and everything in their world. Perhaps the best method is to keep the rules positive. That is, rather than emphasizing the negative, emphasize what the child should do. Don't say, "Never walk home from school alone because you might get kidnapped by a mean man who will hurt you." Instead say, "Always walk home with other kids so that all of you will be safe together."

Your rules will also be more convincing if you emphasize the positive. "There have been some dangerous things happen in that alley and I don't want you to cut through it. It's safer if you walk down Miller Street to come home." With this approach the child understands that the alley can be dangerous. But if you say something like, "If you walk down that alley a mean old man will pull you into his garage and hurt you," you will create fear in your child and a mystery about the alley that just might tempt him. Then if he does go down it and a mean old man doesn't attack him, he may start to doubt your rules and feel confident to go down the alley again, and again.

Here are some safety tips that have been around since we were children but are still good. Remember, teach the rules in a positive way so your child is not frightened and the rules become part of his routine behavior.

- Familiarize your children with the block homes in your neighborhood, around the school, and any other place your child plays. Ask the school for a list of block homes it supports, or check for a list from your local Crime Prevention Office. If there are block homes in your immediate area, you might want to consider introducing yourself and your child to them. That way they get to know you and your child and you get a chance to see what kind of a person lives in the block home.

- Children should know their address, phone number and parents' names. Instruct your child to give his address and phone number only to school officials or the police.

- Children should never get in a car with a stranger, man or woman. Teach your children that if the occupants of a car should try to call them over, they should run away, preferably in the opposite direction the car is headed.

- Teach your children to avoid gang neighborhoods. But if you live in a gang-infested neighborhood, your children should never walk by themselves. Tell them to never stare at a gang, an act most gangs consider a challenge. They should go around the block, go back to where they started, go to a store, a Block Home, or any public place where they can call someone for a ride.

- Children should walk against the flow of traffic to make it difficult or impossible for someone in a car to follow them.

- Children should be taught to pay attention to their surroundings. They need to stay alert and aware of who and what is around them. Predators look for a child who walks timidly and looks lost, sad or confused.

- Children should drop everything they have in their hands and run. Teach your children that if they need to run, they should drop their backpacks, books, notebooks and coats so they can run easier and faster. Since it may be difficult for them to leave their things, you need to emphasize that in an emergency, they won't get into trouble for doing it.

- Children should know the difference between a wrong touch and an OK touch. They should be taught to say no to any adult who touches them in a way that makes them feel scared or uncomfortable. Children should know to tell their parents if they are touched in a wrong way.

- Children should be taught to run to a safe place when in trouble. They can run to a block home, a police or fire station, a store, a restaurant, any public place where there are other people and a telephone.

- Children should shout, "This is not my father (mother)!" If children only cry and struggle, onlookers may think the child is simply having a tantrum.

- Walk with other children whenever possible. Predators look for the lone straggler. Arrange for your children to walk

Above. - Children should know it's OK to drop their things so they can run faster from danger.

Left. - Teach your children to be alert to their surroundings.

to and from school with other children and always wait for the bus in a group.

- Use a code word. Your children will find this fun. Devise a code word that only you and your child share. If a couple in a car tells your son they are supposed to pick him up, he can ask for the code word. If they don't know it, he should not go with them.
- Stay alert on a bus and sit close to the driver. Your children should know where they are going and where they get off. If they insist on reading on the bus, tell them to make a practice of looking up every minute or so to evaluate their surroundings. They should never sleep and never close their eyes while listening to their head phones. If a stranger starts to hassle them, they should draw attention to the situation by calling out to the driver or moving over by him.
- Never help an adult stranger. This rule can be confusing to very young children, especially when we tell them to be polite to adults. But it's an important rule because it's a common technique used by child predators. Teach your children that a stranger should never have to ask a small child to help them carry groceries into a house or to walk behind the garage to help look for a lost kitty. Helping their parents and select relatives is OK, but they should know that a stranger or a slight acquaintance (remember, 80 to 85 percent of all child molestations are committed by someone the child knows) should not have to ask them to go someplace else to help. Make it a strict rule that they always ask you before they go anywhere with another person, even across the street.

Carrying Valuables

- Children should never wear valuable clothing, jewelry or carry a lot of money. Your child may look good in that expensive jacket but he may get assaulted and robbed of it.

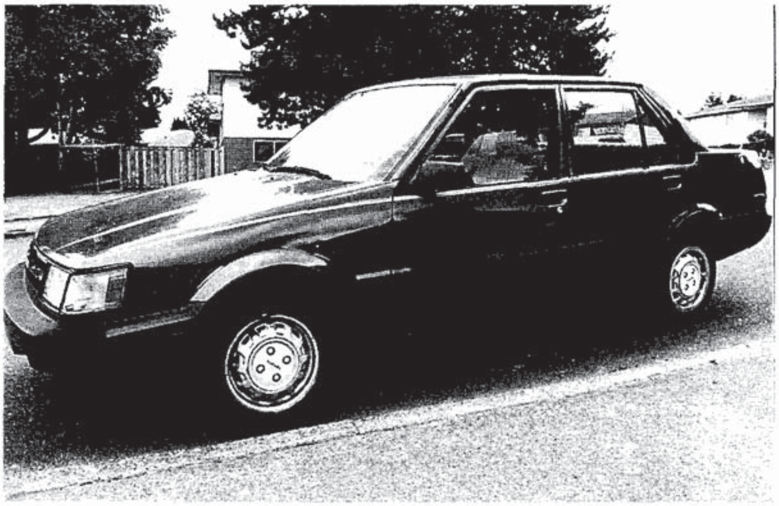
He should be taught to never flash wads of money or dad's expensive watch.

- Teach your children to surrender whatever the robber wants. Robbery, taking property by force, is common in schools today. Instruct your child to give up whatever the robber wants, especially if he has a weapon.
- Remember as much as possible about the stranger. Using the guide provided in this book, teach your child how to remember descriptions. Use cars and people the child is familiar with to compare against the suspect and his vehicle. "Was the man taller or shorter than dad?" "Was the car like ours or Uncle John's?"
- Kids should know their address and phone number. It's amazing how many seven, eight and nine-year-old children don't know their address, telephone number, or their parents work number. Children as young as five years should be able to memorize this information, and can if you make a game of learning it, giving them praise when they almost get it right and lots of praise when they can finally repeat it back correctly.

Place a list of emergency numbers by the phone—police, fire, ambulance, close relatives—and teach your children when and how to use them. Consider getting a phone you can program to quick-dial emergency numbers and teach the codes to your children. Rehearse with them how to call emergency numbers, what to tell the operators, and how to answer their questions.

Teach your children to never give a caller their name or address, especially when you are not at home. Consider telling them not to answer the phone when alone, or to just let the answer machine take the call. Devise a signal so they know it's you calling—for example, let it ring once or twice, hang up, then call again.

Your children should know who they can let in the house when you are gone. The doors should be kept locked at all times



SUSPECT VEHICLE DESCRIPTION FORM

License Number______________________

Make_______ **Model**_______ **Body style**_____ **Vehicle year**___

Color_________ **Identifying marks**________________________

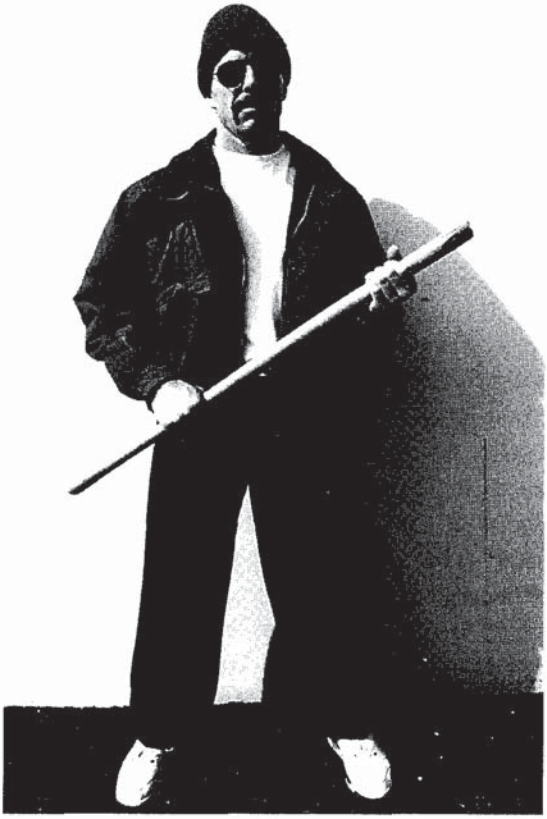
No. of occupants______ **Race of occupants**__________

Others observations____________________________________

What did they do?______________________________________

____

____



SUSPECT DESCRIPTION FORM

Sex____ Race____ Age____ Height______ Weight______

Hair color_______ Facial hair_______

Coat______ Shirt______ Pants______ Shoes______ Hat_____

Tattoos________ Speech peculiarities_________ Limp______

Glasses________ Eye color_________

WEAPON__________________________________

Other observations______________________________________

What did s/he do?_______________________________________

____

and your child should be instructed to use the peep hole or the window to see who is there.

It's most important to teach your children street and home safety in a way that does not frighten them. Make them feel that learning and practicing safety measures is important to your family and to the neighbors, school teachers, and the police. When your children understand that many other people are concerned about safety, they will feel part of a neighborhood effort.

Surveying Your Neighborhood For Hot Spots

Either take it upon yourself to survey your neighborhood or involve a cadre of concerned neighbors. The objective is to look for dangerous locations and potential problem areas, such as a gang house your children have to pass on the way to school, street corners where older kids hang out, abandoned buildings that act as a magnet to street toughs, and any other place that might attract, tempt or somehow harm a small child. Ask your children to point out problem areas; they probably know of places you haven't even considered.

Once dangerous locations have been pinpointed, talk with your children and with neighbors as to the best ways to deal with them. For example, to avoid a gang house, find a different route to school. Get volunteers to act as safety patrols at street corners where older toughs congregate. Talk to the owner of empty buildings or to city officials about abandoned buildings in your neighborhood.

Getting other parents and neighbors involved adds eyes, ears and ideas to the effort of achieving a safer neighborhood for children. Since you can't always be with them, it's good to know there are other people out there who care, too. Make an agreement with neighbors and other parents to look out for all the children. Call each other or the police if something looks suspicious.

Getting Rid Of Neighborhood Drug Houses

Drug houses are houses, apartments or condos where drugs

COCKTAILS
CASINO

Would you want your children walking past this neighborhood hot spot?

are sold and/or manufactured. They establish themselves in the poorest neighborhoods as well as the more affluent. Though they usually begin quietly and unassumingly—a deliberate effort to avoid complaints that will bring the police—the quiet is always short-lived. In a matter of days of them moving in, foot and vehicle traffic increases, followed by loud parties, fights and shootings.

Every large city is plagued with drug houses; some cities have dozens. Even small towns and rural areas are not immune to this modern day problem, one that creates fear and anxiety in a neighborhood, and reduces its livability.

Here are a few obvious indicators that a drug house is operating in your neighborhood.

- The house/apartment/condo is rundown
- The shades are always closed
- The yard is not maintained
- There is heavy vehicular traffic
- There is heavy foot traffic in and out
- Visitors stay for less than ten minutes

- Some visitors appear to be gang members
- Activity at the house goes on 24 hours a day
- Strange odors emanate from the house (possible drug manufacturing)

Many people think they have to tolerate a drug house because there is nothing they can do about it. Not true. Eradicating a drug house is possible, but there is no one way to do it. It requires some creativity by you, your neighbors and the police.

Working With The Police

Once you have established that a drug house is operating in your neighborhood, you need to begin immediate steps to get rid of it. One of the first things you can do is make an appointment to talk with your local police narcotics division and the officer who patrols your neighborhood to tell him of your suspicions. Don't be surprised if they are already aware of the house and have been monitoring its activity. On the other hand, they may be unaware, so the more detailed information you can supply, the faster they can get to work on the problem.

It's important to know that when you talk to the police, you should not expect them to simply go in and arrest everyone in the drug house. It would be great if they could, but the justice system doesn't work that way. The police need to investigate the matter, gather evidence through observation of the location, make undercover drug buys, and conduct many other important legal requirements before they can act. Additionally, the police are probably working other drug houses and are overworked, overwhelmed, and understaffed to meet the volume of complaints they receive daily.

But informing the police is a start. Here is the type of information that can help them.

- Address of the house
- Dates and time of activity

- Description of the occupants
- Description of vehicles belonging to the house
- Indicators of gang activity
- Excessive vehicle and foot traffic
- Occupants of house walk routinely to the curb and exchange something with occupants of cars
- Foul odors (could indicate a drug lab)
- Visitors and occupants display weapons
- Description of cars and license plates of the occupants and the visitors
- Which days of the week and times of the day of the greatest activity
- Presence of underage juveniles

An anonymous tip to the police is better than no tip, but information from a named citizen will usually get more attention. If you are concerned about being identified as the complainant by the occupants of the drug house, ask the police not to come to your house and to keep your name confidential. Instead, either talk with them on the phone, or go to the police station in person.

You will get much further with the police if you approach them in a professional manner: organized, specific with your information, and with empathy as to the difficulty or working within the confines of a justice system that sometimes seems upside down. No matter how frustrated you are, don't tell them they are doing a terrible job; don't tell them who you know in city hall; don't tell them you are going to burn the drug house to the ground. Be polite, persistent and ask what can be done. Once you have established a good contact within the police department, keep it and try to contact that person every time. Don't waste his time; you don't want a reputation with the police as being a chronic complainer. Contact him only when you have good information.

Enlist The Help Of Others

The presence of a drug house is not solely your problem. There is power in numbers, so include your neighbors in your effort. Get everyone together to share information about the problem, then discuss ways to eradicate the house. Invite your neighborhood police officer to the meeting for legal advice and to find out what the police department can and cannot do. If you have a neighborhood association and a crime prevention person, invite them as well. They may have dealt with similar problems elsewhere and they can tell you what methods have been successful in the past.

Encourage all of your neighbors to write letters to the police, the mayor and other city officials. Keep your text rational and credible, backing your concerns with factual information. Letters signed by several neighbors may get faster results.

Many drug houses have been closed because they violate city codes. An unkempt house, overgrown yard, garbage thrown out into the back yard, syringes scattered about the street, and beater cars parked on the sidewalk can be reported to the city as a nuisance. Check with the tax assessment office to see if the house is being rented. If it is, call the landlord and put pressure on him to take action against the renters, then advise him that now that he is aware of the problem, he could possibly be libel for illegal activity on the premise.

The presence of a drug house is a blight to your neighborhood and brings with it a criminal element and a great potential for violence. There is no one method of eradication that works every time. If one fails, try another. Know that you may find yourself pitted against the justice system, city, county and state government, and miles of red tape that will try all the patience you can muster. But you must remain persistent.

WALKING THE SIDEWALKS SAFELY

It's almost an understatement to say that our city sidewalks can be dangerous. Though it's worse at night, there are countless incidents everyday where innocent people are verbally harassed, pushed, struck, spit on, robbed, raped and killed.

The man looked normal enough as he walked along the crowded sidewalk each noon hour, except for the six-inch long knife he carried concealed in his palm. As he nonchalantly maneuvered through the congested sidewalk, he randomly jabbed the blade into the backs of shoppers. He continued his assault for several days, and by the time he was apprehended, over a dozen people had been injured.

Though the streets are dangerous and random incidents of violence are as common as rain, there are many defensive measures you can take to increase your chances of getting through your outings safely.

Dress To Run

Women: would you rather run from danger in a mini skirt and high-heels, or in a blazer, slacks and comfortable shoes? Men: do your tight jeans, that long overcoat, those heavy boots restrict your movement?

Be cautious of wearing clothing that restricts your ability to run or defend yourself.

Where To Safe Walk

The old advice was to always walk along the curb to avoid being grabbed by a mugger. The new advice, based on crime studies, suggest it's a better idea to walk down the middle of the sidewalk. That way muggers and purse snatchers who hide between parked cars, or leap from slow-passing ones, or ride by on bicycles, can't reach out and grab your bag or punch you in the face.

There are times when you should walk next to a building, such as when there are dangerous looking types clustered next to the curb. Though you will at least be safe on the wall side, be aware of doorway insets and corners where an assailant could be waiting for you to pass.

If you can see in advance that there is a threat on the sidewalk, cross the street, or consider walking around the block.

When walking along deserted streets at night, consider walking down the middle of the street. This allows you to see everything around you and gives you time to react if a threat comes from the sidewalk or between houses. However, know that if the threat is in an approaching car, the occupants may easily see you.

Don't become complacent just because you are in your own neighborhood. Keep in mind that one third of all street muggings occur within four blocks of the victim's home.

Eye Contact

"Don't look at him," our mothers warned us as we walked past an unsavory type. "Don't make eye contact."

Though once considered sage advice, we now know that predators look for people who appear to be lost in their own world, oblivious to their surroundings. But even when you are not oblivious to what is going on, avoiding eye contact with others may create the impression you are.

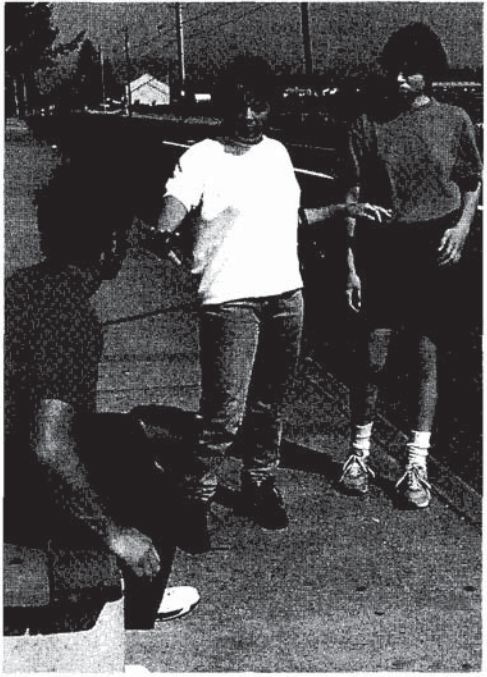
If you have noticed someone looking at you, make brief eye contact. Predators tend to avoid someone who looks like they might make a scene or respond assertively. They want their victims to be meek and mild, so they pick on people shuffling along the sidewalk, looking in store windows, and listening to headphones.

If you notice someone staring at you, don't stare back and don't assume a defiant attitude. Instead, give them a quick look, one that communicates that you know they are there and you won't be taken by surprise.

"Only two kinds of people stare at other people," says a Chicago policewoman. "Nuts and police officers. If you want to be safe on the street, make eye contact—stare at them directly. They're going to think you're a nut or a cop and they won't mess with you. Usually the criminal has a tremendous instinct of who to pick on. Street people are expert at singling out the weak."

Left. - If you notice someone staring at you, make brief eye contact to communicate that you know he is there.

Right. - If he starts to come toward you, gesture for him to stop and say in a commanding voice, "Hold it. Can I help you?"



You Are In Charge

This can be hard for some people to do, but it works.

Say you are walking along a sidewalk and a man you had already noticed leaning against a car, suddenly pushes away and begins walking toward you. If you put your head down and hurry past him, as so many people often do, you won't be able to see if he comes up behind you or anything else he might do.

Instead, try this. Stop, hold up your palm and say firmly, "Hold it. Can I help you?" Do this before he gets within ten feet of you. Maintain eye contact and wear a serious facial expression that conveys you are not afraid and you mean business. He will probably stop and be taken back by your no-nonsense demeanor.

Maybe all he wanted were directions and your response startled him. Sorry Charlie.

But if he had wrong intentions, your strength, which you conveyed in your tone of voice, your demeanor, and your facial expression, more times than not, will change his mind.

The Buddy System

It works in swimming and it works when walking on the sidewalk: take a buddy with you and reduce the chance of being a victim by 80 percent. Assailants prefer their victims to be alone.

Waiting For The Bus

Know that the longer you stand on the street waiting for the bus, the greater the chance you will be targeted by an assailant. If possible, time your arrival at the bus stop so you have to wait only a few minutes on the street corner. If a long delay can't be helped, try waiting inside a business or get a buddy to ride with you; two people waiting are safer than one.

When on the bus, try to get a seat close to the driver. Read if you want, but look up every two or three minutes to evaluate your surroundings. If you feel uncomfortable with anyone on the bus, don't read. Never sleep on the bus.

Carrying A Handbag

Some experts suggest that you carry your handbag slung across your chest diagonally, to make it hard for a purse snatcher to take it away from you. The problem with this method is that a thief may see only the bag and not how securely it's attached to you. When he runs by and grabs it, you will go too. If you are lucky, your hip will strike the pavement first; if you are not lucky, your head will hit.

Try carrying your strap purse under your coat. Then if you want to sling it over your shoulder you can because it can't be seen by a thief. If you prefer to carry it outside your coat, sling it over one shoulder so it rides at waist level under your arm, then hold the front strap with firm tension.

To prevent thieves from reaching into your purse, don't carry one with open pockets, or carry it so the open pockets are against your body. When walking with a buddy, carry your purse between the two of you to make it more difficult for a thief to get to it.

If you are carrying a purse without straps, carry it under your coat. If you prefer to carry it outside your coat, tuck it in your armpit and clutch it firmly with your hand. You might even try carrying it upside down with your hand on the clasp. In the event someone grabs at it, you can snap it open and spill the contents onto the ground. Few thieves are going to bother to search through your valuables.

Keep your purse on your lap when using a public restroom. Never set it on the floor or hang it from a door hook where a quick-handed thief can grab it.

The uniform police officer stepped into the restroom stall, unhooked his pistol belt and set it by his feet as he sat down. As he hummed and read his newspaper, a hand quickly darted under the stall door and slipped his pistol from his holster.

Pickpockets

With the daily news full of slaughter and mayhem, incidents of pickpocketing rarely get reported, though they are out there

Left. - A clutch purse can be tucked snugly under the arm.

Right. - A strap purse can be carried over your shoulder and under your coat.

Left. - A purse with open side pockets should be carried with the pockets against your body.

Right. - Carry your purse between you and your friend.

everyday relieving people of their hard-earned money. As always, they prefer crowded places, such as supermarkets, athletic events, ticket lines and subways.

To safeguard your valuables, carry your wallet inside your jacket pocket or in a snug front-pant's pocket. You can also place a comb in the wallet's fold so that a tooth will catch on your pocket if the wallet is pulled out by someone who doesn't know how.

Be cautious of letting people "help" you. That person offering to pick up your spilled packages just may be removing your wallet.

If you know you are going to be in a crowd, consider carrying your money and credit cards in your pockets. Since pickpockets usually focus on wallets, this allows you to carry out your transactions without showing potential thieves where you keep yours.

When The Robber Is Armed

If you have the misfortune of facing an armed robber, give him your money, your coat, your shoes, whatever he wants. As angry and indignant as you may be, your money and credit cards are not worth dying for.

Avoid talking to the armed robber. Don't give him any reason to get angry. Don't cuss, plead, or show him pictures of your kids. Just give him what he asks for while you memorize what he looks like. You will be frightened for sure, but try and see beyond his weapon to note his race, height, weight, clothing and any outstanding characteristics.

If your "gut" tells you he is going to shoot you, throw your money to one side and then run in the opposite direction. Odds are he will go after your money and let you go. If he does shoot, odds are he will miss because you are running away. Scary? Yes. But if you don't run, you will make a much easier target for him to hit.

Do You Really Want To Go Into That Neighborhood?

If you are going into a particular neighborhood for illicit

If your instinct tells you the mugger is going to hurt you, throw your purse in one direction and run in the opposite direction. Chances are he will go for the purse rather than you.

reasons, know full well that you are most likely going into a den of thieves, or worse. People who go where there are street prostitutes or where drugs are sold are ripe and ready victims.

One policeman put it this way. *"Many people become victims because they are in the wrong place at the wrong time, and they are in the wrong place because they want to be. These are people, often from the suburbs, who come into town to buy illegal drugs, solicit a prostitute or engage in illegal gambling.*

The love of vice combined with their lack of street smarts exposes them to predators looking for an easy mark. Before these walking victims know it, they get robbed, assaulted and killed. And since they are in places where they shouldn't be, they usually lie to the police or withhold information, making it difficult to capture the perps."

After You Have Been Robbed

Call 911 immediately and tell them you have just been robbed. Since most citizens erroneously call a house break-in a "robbery," expect the police operator to clarify that you really mean robbery. Then, as calmly as you are able, give a good description of the suspect and the direction he fled.

Be sure to notify your bank and credit card companies as soon as you are able. For that reason, it's always a good idea to have all of your credit card and checking account numbers listed somewhere separate from your wallet.

AUTOMATIC TELLER MACHINES

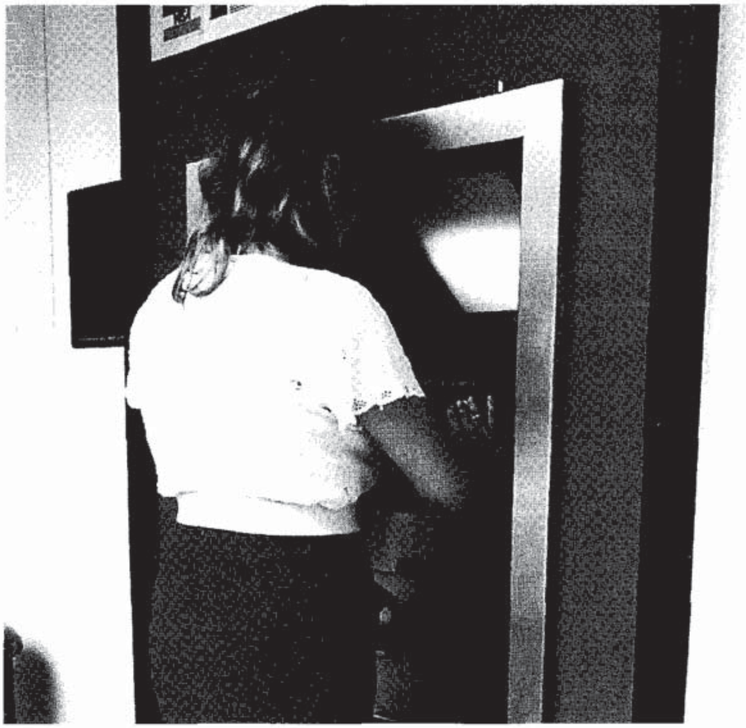
As if it were a cruel joke, many ATM machines are placed in poorly lit and desolate locations, such as an isolated corner of a shopping mall or a poorly-lit side of a bank. It's no wonder that one in three people who get robbed at an ATM get injured.

A pregnant Los Angeles woman went to a bank ATM located in a semi-dark, tree-shrouded area. After she retrieved her money, a man stepped from the shadows and mumbled threateningly, "Give me what you got." She immediately activated her car alarm and began to run toward it. But the robber, feeling comfortable in the isolated location, fatally stabbed her in the stomach.

Without a doubt, the money machine is one of the better inventions to come along, but it's one that can breed problems when it's used without caution. Thieves and muggers know ATMs are a way to get quick money, especially if the customer looks like an easy mark.

The best way to avoid being victimized at an ATM is to abstain from using it at all. Instead, use checks, credit cards, or get sufficient cash to last you between bank visits. But of course life never runs smoothly and there are times when you have to use them. When you do, follow these safety tips.

- Use the machine only during daylight hours. Eighty percent of ATM robberies happen at night.
- Park your car close and don't get out until the area looks safe.
- Be aware of the area around ATMs. Look for anyone or anything suspicious before you approach. Avoid machines in secluded or poorly lit areas.
- Know what business you are going to do before you go to the machine to minimize the transaction time.
- If a suspicious person approaches while you are using the ATM, immediately terminate your transaction and leave.
- Stand close to the machine so others can't see your transaction. Immediately remove cash, receipt, and card.



Stand close to the ATM to conceal your transactions.

- After your transaction, get into your car and lock the doors.
- Don't count your money on the way to your car.
- Memorize your Personal Identification Number (PIN). Don't write it on your bank card or anywhere it will be apparent as to what it is.
- Don't tell anyone your PIN number. A bank employee will never ask you for it. If one does, immediately tell a supervisor.
- Choose a word or a name for your PIN number so it will be easier to remember. Never use part of your Social Security Number or your birth date since thieves will try those numbers first.
- Know where your card is at all times. Immediately notify your bank if it's stolen.
- If you are robbed at a money machine, don't resist. Try to stay calm so you can think clearly. Get a good description of the suspect and the getaway car; call the police.

"I never approach anyone who goes to an ATM with someone else," said a man who had been arrested for robbery. "I'll wait for someone who is alone."

Think of the ATM device as a potential crime scene. Use it with caution.

STREET GANGS

New street gangs are forming every day and young people are joining them at an alarming rate. With easy access to firearms, a collective gang mentality, and a seeming disregard for human life, the presence of street gangs is rapidly changing the fabric of many communities and the way people live in them. In fact, street gangs have already made some communities virtual war zones, with the sound of gunfire filling the air every night as an ever increasing number of young people fall victim, one way or another, to gang warfare. The annual statistics are shocking: hundreds dead, thousands wounded.

Their Mind-set

Though there are many psychological and sociological reasons young people join gangs, for our purposes here we only need to consider their need for power. It's what they are all about, and in most cases, it's what they lacked before they became involved in gangs. They need to continuously reinforce the fact they are powerful, and they seek this reinforcement by trying to instill fear and intimidation in others.

They dress to show their power. Skinheads shave their heads and wear military clothing to not only show who they are and what they believe in, but to frighten people. Other gangs wear distinctive colors or oversized clothing to send out a message that they are gang members who are dangerous and to be feared.

To the non-gang person, gang member's baggy pants, exposed underwear, oversized shirts and backward hats looks silly. But no matter how ridiculous and outrageous their look is, keep in mind that their appearance is most important to them. It's a big part of their identity and they take it very seriously. Don't criticize their look. They will not take it well.

"The gang is everything to them. Street gangs don't have to recruit; they're not running around looking under mattresses for recruits; kids want to join. A lot of them are born into it. I've been at christenings where the baby being baptized is wearing gang colors. You go to a gang member's funeral, the casket is draped in the gang's colors. The gang mentality is entrenched in their brains, It's who they are," says a gang task force police officer.

Let's take a look at the most common types of gang activity and what you can do to keep from getting hurt. Know that there is no one right answer as to what to do when you suddenly find yourself in one of the below situations. Sometimes people respond in ways that could not be more wrong, but they get through the situation unharmed. On the other hand, sometimes a person will do everything right but will still get hurt.

Shootings

Although the injured that fall from gang shootings are mostly other gang members, innocent people get injured and killed all the time.

Gang members rarely consider their surroundings when they execute a drive-by shooting. In fact, many could care less about innocent people getting hit as they spray multiple rounds at a house or street corner where they *think* their target may be.

Though most gang shootings happen at night, more and more are taking place during the hours of daylight.

Two cars, each containing six SE Asian gang members, slowly drove down the quiet residential street in the early afternoon sun. As they approached the target house, the shooters leaned out the car windows, sprayed the house with automatic gunfire, then continued on down the street. At the corner they stopped *and reloaded their weapons, then drove back, the shooters again leaning out the windows and hosing the house with bullets. This time a neighbor, unrelated to the disagreement between the shooters and the target house, ran out onto his porch and began firing at the passing cars with his semi-automatic handgun.*

When all the shooting was over, hundreds of rounds had been expended, but miraculously no one had been hit.

Bullets don't come with names attached to them. They keep right on going when they miss and eventually drop when they run out of energy, or stop when they hit something or someone.

What To Do When A Gang Shooting Erupts

Families who live in gang infested neighborhoods routinely gather in basements and backrooms when gang gunfire explodes outside their homes. Though this is a sad commentary on our times, it's nonetheless the best way to protect your family from stray bullets.

Whenever shots are fired in the sprawling, gang-infested apartment complex, which occurs two or three nights a week, the young, single mother automatically gathers her two toddlers in her hallway and shields them with her body.

If you hear gunfire outside your home, resist the natural impulse to go to the window or door to look out. Instead, retreat with your family to the basement or the opposite end of your house or apartment, then call 911 and remain secluded until you deem it safe to resume normal activity.

When you are outside, know that buildings, asphalt, sidewalks and cars have a way of distorting the sound of gunfire. A salvo of shots that sounds as if they are coming from your left may actually be coming from behind. If you scramble behind a parked car, you may end up on the side where the shooting is going on. Cover may also be several feet away, or a half block away, and even if you make it that far it may be of no use anyway.

However, the location of the ground is an absolute: it's right there beneath you.

Drop to the ground, flatten out, and evaluate the situation to determine where the shots are coming from. If cover is just a few feet away, crawl to it, don't run. Running not only exposes you, but may draw the attention of the shooters who may think you are part of the rival gang.

Cover is anything that stops or deflects a bullet, such as a parked car, a steel mail box, the corner of a building, or a fire hydrant. Concealment is anything that hides you from the shooter, such as a tree branch with big leaves or a bed sheet hanging from a clothes line. When given a choice, choose cover.

Once you have established good cover, stay there until the shooting is over. Don't get into a "the grass is always greener

Take cover behind a car's wheel will provide good protection if caught in a shootout.

somewhere else" mode and needlessly expose yourself by dashing from cover to cover. Change position only if the shooters are moving your way. Even then, consider moving only the minimum, say, to crawl under a car or scramble to other side of a mailbox.

What To Do When Encountering Gang Members

Gangs like to congregate at street corners, front yards, parking lots, school yards, bus stops, shopping malls, and other places where non-gang teens gather. It's a time for them to socialize, sell drugs and weapons, plan crimes, and just carry on as young people do. But the act of congregating creates a ripe atmosphere for violence. It may erupt from within the gathering—usually the result of an exchange of words or an argument over a member of the opposite sex—or it may come from outside the gathering, such as a passing car load of rival gang members.

Twelve Latino gang members stood on the sidewalk socializing. A dark sedan pulled up and two black gang members got out, one armed with an Uzi submachine gun. The black gangster pumped twelve rounds toward the crowd, but amazingly only one person was struck. As the car sped off, several Latino gangsters gave chase on foot, firing their handguns into the back of the car.

Gang members like to walk in groups of three, five, ten. They savor the attention they get, the way in which their presence, their look, and their numbers intimidate people.

Say you are walking to the corner store when you see six or seven young people gathered on the sidewalk ahead. As you get closer, you notice they are all wearing oversized jackets, baggy pants slung low on their hips, and black rags tied around their foreheads.

There is no argument you have the right as a tax-paying citizen to walk down the sidewalk through a cluster of rough looking gang members. This is mentioned because there are many people who become indignant when it's suggested they alter their course. If you are one of these people, you just have to swallow your indignation and use a little common sense to get through the next few minutes. The best decision you could make is to simply cross the street and go on your way.

Let's say you are an ornery character and refuse to change for them. Chances are you will be able to pass by without incident, but don't expect the gang members to move aside for you. You will have to walk along the wall or step off the curb to get by them. It's just not right and maybe you are angry you had to do that. But you got by them safely and now you are on your way.

But what if they decide to toy with you a little?

The elderly black woman was shuffling along the sidewalk, unaware of the fifteen skinheads drinking beer on the porch of an old house. As she passed, the skinheads encircled her, taunted and harassed her with racial epithets. Two of them brandished baseball bats and postured as if they were going to strike her. She was eventually able to pass, but was traumatized for months by the experience.

Since you don't know how a gang will react to you, it's wisest to simply cross the street. Some people might think of it as backing off, but it's just good, common sense, and all it costs is a couple of additional minutes to your journey.

What To Do When Gangs Party

Gang members love to have parties in their homes, in their apartments, and around their parked cars, which always involves loud music, shouting, fighting and other forms of disruptive behavior. Usually as the party wears on, and the effects of the alcohol starts to take affect, the participants spill out into the street to fight, race their cars, and sometimes fire shots into the air or at each other.

Rarely will a gang party start at seven and end quietly before midnight. Usually it will begin about midnight and keep going until it peters out around dawn or until someone calls the police to complain about the ruckus.

Never go to the party site and demand they quiet down.

After the funeral of a gang member, over 100 young gangsters gathered at a house to mourn and drink. Dozens of them spilled out onto the lawn, sidewalk and street, yelling, brawling and racing their cars through the quiet residential area. A neighbor from across the street came out onto his lawn and called out for them to quiet down. Immediately he was struck with a 40 oz. beer bottle, knocked to the ground and kicked repeatedly. The party went on, but his injuries both physical and mental, required months of recuperation and therapy.

It's a better idea to call 911 and let the police handle the situation. Ask the dispatcher if you can remain anonymous; it's best that the gang members don't know you are the complainant. If you absolutely must look out the window, do so as discreetly as possible. One universal characteristic among gangs is that they will seek revenge against witnesses, complainants, anyone who causes them problems.

What Can You Do When Gangs Come To Your Neighborhood?

When gangs begin to move into a community, you cannot bury your head in the sand and hope that someone else does something about it. Everyone must get involved before gangs become mainstream as they have already in many communities around the country.

- Report all crimes and gang activity. Call 911 at the first sign of activity. If you wait too long, the problem may entrench, making it even more difficult to eradicate. The police rely on your information.
- Organize a block watch. Neighbors should organize to enhance their strength and share information. Gangs

know there is strength in numbers; neighbors can use the same principle.

- Be visible. Neighborhoods where people work and play in their yards, walk their dogs, pick up litter, in other words maintain a visible presence, are less likely to have criminal gangs moving about.
- Take pictures. Neighbors can take photos and video footage of any activity. Don't risk your safety for the pictures.
- Paint out graffiti. Painting over graffiti works more times than not. It sends out a message that the neighborhood belongs to people who care about it and are not going to stand still for gang activity.
- Get involved with young people in the neighborhood. People should volunteer their time to schools, churches, parks and neighborhood community centers. It tells young people that older people care and want to be involved with them.
- Be aware and stay informed. People who are ignorant of the issue and have their heads in the clouds, won't see the early warning signs of gangs in their neighborhood. Knowledge is power.

VIOLENCE IN SCHOOL

No school is immune to violence. Shootings, stabbings and assaults are happening in middle-class neighborhood schools as well as in poor inner-city schools where, sadly, we have become almost desensitized to such bloodshed.

A 17-year-old student in Texas fired multiple rounds at his classmates as they were returning to class from an athletic event. Six people were hit by rounds and a seventh person was trampled by stampeding students who were fleeing the shooting.

As several students stood on the steps of their high school in Portland, Oregon, they were fired upon by a gunman passing by in a car.

During recess at a Columbus, Ohio middle school, a 13-year-old boy shot another boy in the head.

A study of South Side Chicago high school students between the ages of 13 and 18 found that nearly 50 percent had seen a stabbing, 61 percent had witnessed a shooting, 45 percent had seen someone get killed and 25 percent had experienced all three. When a group of 5th graders from the worst neighborhood in New Orleans were asked how many had seen a gun in the last 24 hours, every hand went up. When asked how many had ever seen someone killed, half raised their hands.

Although there have been numerous shootings in schools throughout the country, the good news is that there have been few deaths. But firearm incidents are on the rise and it's just a matter of time until more students are killed.

More students are carrying guns to school now than ever before. One study found that on any given day in the United States, there are 250,000 handguns in elementary, middle and high schools. They can be found in waistbands, jacket pockets, purses, backpacks, and lockers. Making a bad situation worse is the fact these guns are in the hands of young people who have little or no experience in their use.

In a classroom in Los Angeles, a teenage boy reached into his school bag and inadvertently discharged a high-calibre handgun he was carrying with his school books. The wild bullet struck and killed another classmate.

Although there are some parents who are indifferent or oblivious as to what is going on, most are frightened over such incidents and feel hopeless as to what they can do.

Psychological Effect

With so many students carrying firearms, with school officials conducting pat downs and searching lockers, and with metal detectors at the doors, how can students concentrate on the task of learning? Even students who are not directly involved in firearm incidents feel insecure and unsafe in the halls and classrooms. Some are too frightened to even go the restroom by themselves.

Parents are worried too. Some say they send their children off to school with the gnawing realization that today could be the day when shots are fired in the school parking lot or on the playground. Those parents who can afford it are taking their kids out of public schools and sending them off to private ones.

Students, who would never otherwise give a passing thought to guns, are carrying them to school for protection.

"If I think I'm going to get shot," said one 15-year-old boy, "I'm going to try and shoot first."

Compounding the horror are parents who supply their children with firearms to carry to school. "It's for my son's self-defense," said one mother.

What Is Causing The Violence?

As with many of society's complex issues, there is no one answer. In general, we can say that what is happening in our schools is a reflection of what is going on outside of them. That is, society has become violent and schools are part of our society.

Without question, many children are directly or indirectly taught that violence is a solution to problems. They hear it from their parents, they see it on television, in the movies, and they see it happening in their neighborhoods and schools. Some grow up believing that the way to prevent violence is to use firearms. Some see guns as a tool to compensate for their sense of inferiority.

"When I've got my .357 I feel like I'm 6-foot-4, and weigh 210 pounds," says a 14-year-old middle school student.

Guns are easily accessible. Students buy and sell them on the street, at school, and they can get them from their homes. In fact, getting guns at home is quite easy, considering there are over 200 million firearms in the United States.

Gangs

Disputes over gang activity and drug dealings are the leading causes of shootings in school. Some shootings are so blatant and so violent that it's simply amazing more innocent bystanders are not killed.

Misconceptions About Firearms

Young people see Schwazeneggar, Stallone and other action heroes running through a hail storm of bullets, then emerging victorious without so much as a scratch. They believe if their heroes can do it, then they can. Most teens can't comprehend their own death, and for some it's especially hard to comprehend another young person's death by gunshot.

"How can that little hole kill someone?" a 15-year-old gang member asked a hospital nurse.

How can young people understand the reality of the real pain and physical destruction caused by a firearm when for most of them their concept of violence, especially shootings, is what they see on the boob tube.

Teaching Your Children What To Do

As soon as your children are old enough to understand, teach them that guns are dangerous. Don't cloak the issue in soft words. Make it clear that guns can hurt and kill. Teach them that if they see someone at school or in the neighborhood with a gun, they should leave the area immediately and tell a responsible adult or call 911. They should know to never stay in the situation and try to handle it.

If a fight breaks out at school, they should not go and watch it as kids are apt to do. Two decades ago, an after school fight was just that, a fight. But times are different now. Today, with the growing proliferation of guns in the schools, it's common for someone to brandish one and fire rounds. Tell your children that missed rounds don't automatically drop to the ground, but keep on going until something stops them. When a gun is fired in a crowd, it's often an innocent person who stops the bullet.

If your child has witnessed a gun incident at school, talk to him about the situation. Don't lecture, but listen and discuss the incident so your child learns from the experience. Discuss the good things he did and talk about what he could have done differently. If he was threatened and used his brain to get away, praise him.

What You Can Do In The Schools

You must become involved in your children's school. Don't sit back and wait for other parents to handle the problem because they might be sitting back too. Your children's lives are at risk. Get involved and work to make your school a safer place.

Here are some measures already working around the country.

- Metal detectors. Yes, it's come to this. In fact, over one fourth of major urban schools are already using them. All students must pass through one or two doors where metal detectors scan their bodies and their bookbags for weapons.
- Uniformed guards or a police officer patrolling the hallways and school yards has a quieting effect on trouble makers.
- Prohibiting bookbags and lockers has been successful in some high-crime schools. The fewer places guns can be concealed, the fewer opportunities for an angry student to settle a dispute with a gun.
- Shooting drills are conducted at many schools. Somewhat like the air raid drills of the 1950s, students practice diving for cover as if they were hearing gunshots.
- Implement peer discussion groups. Form a group to discuss issues such as conflict resolution techniques, resisting peer pressure, television violence, and crisis intervention.
- Implement a school emergency plan. Parents and school officials should talk about how to notify the police, ambulance, and parents in the event of an emergency. Ensure that there is a way to notify teachers and administration staff if there is a major problem on the campus, such as a student in the halls with a gun.
- Establish clear behavior rules. Work with the school to establish absolute rules and the repercussions for violating

> them. You want the rules to send out a clear message that guns won't be tolerated and violations will be dealt with swiftly by the police and the school.

It used to be that students only had to worry about their next test and whether or not they would have a date for the prom. Now they have to worry about getting shot in the hall.

We must act now.

PART THREE

ARMED SELF-DEFENSE

SHOULD YOU KEEP A GUN IN THE HOUSE?

"I always do my burglaries with a gun in my waist band. If anyone tries to stop me, I'll kill them."

The decision of whether to keep a gun in your house is one that only you can make, not your neighbor, your best friend or your mother. Only you. For some it's an easy decision, while for others it's one that can be as emotional as it is intellectual. If you are still thinking about it, consider the following questions that need to be answered.

- Will a gun be a danger to my children and their friends?
- How familiar am I with a firearm?
- Where will I keep the gun?
- What kind of gun should I get?
- Will the presence of a gun cause friction with a spouse?
- Is a firearm the best defense for my particular needs?
- Which gun is safest to have in the home?
- Which gun is best for home defense?
- Could I actually shoot/kill someone?

These questions and others must be answered intellectually, rather than emotionally. The morning you discover someone has broken into your garage is not the time to rush out and buy the biggest handgun you can lift. It's an important family decision that should be given time to weigh carefully.

Let's say you have considered all the questions and arguments for and against a gun in the home and have decided to get one. The next decision you have to make is what kind of gun best fits *your* needs.

Which Gun Is Best?

If you ask ten firearm experts which gun is best for home defense, you will get ten different answers. Some will advocate various types of shotguns, others claim revolvers offer all that is needed, while the semi-automatic enthusiasts will claim theirs is the best.

What about bullet caliber? Though some homeowners believe it's necessary to have a large, elephant-stopping caliber to defend their family, and many police officers think the larger caliber is best for their job, case studies show that's not always true.

The transient was still holding the bloody knife he had used on the pregnant woman when the officer rounded the corner on foot. The officer drew his Sig Sauer, .45 caliber, semi-auto and ordered the man to drop the knife. When the man lunged, the officer fired a round into his upper body. The man jerked back, but instead of falling, advanced, slashing the air with his knife. The officer fired again and the man twisted around momentarily from the chest hit, then turned back, and began backing the disbelieving officer across the parking lot. He fired, again, and again, but still the man moved forward, still he slashed the air with the knife.

Not until the ninth hit with the .45 caliber bullet, did the man drop fatally to the sidewalk.

A study made by the New York City Police Department

If you decide to get a handgun for your home, analyze your needs then research the many models to choose from.

looked at more than 6,000 shootings over a ten-year period. The study revealed that it was the placement of the bullet, not the caliber, that was the most important factor in determining the effectiveness of a shooting.

Your Considerations

- One of the first considerations you need to make when choosing the best gun for your needs is the weapon's reliability. You might have a gun that could knock the socks off an elephant, but if it doesn't fire at the crucial moment you want it to, the result could be deadly—to you.
- Reliable ammunition is also important. Don't test fire one type of ammo but keep another type in your gun. Test-fire the same ammo to ensure it does what you want it to do.
- Choose a weapon you can shoot accurately in a semi-dark room. Remember, you can't use most gun sights in the dark.
- Choose a weapon you can afford. Many people believe an expensive gun will somehow make them a better shot. These are the same people who think a new, gold-plated barbell set will build bigger muscles than the rusted one

setting out in their garage. Not so. All you need is a moderately priced weapon you can shoot with confidence and skill.

- The cost of the ammo is just as important as the cost of the weapon, maybe more. Since it may take a lot of shooting practice before you become comfortable with your new gun, you need to consider whether you can afford its ammunition. You may like the size of a .45 caliber, but practicing with the big ammo is going to cost you a lot more than the smaller .22 ammunition. As a result, you may not practice as much as you should.
- You need to evaluate your bullet's penetration power. You want it powerful enough to stop an intruder, but you don't want it to pass through your bedroom wall and into your child's room. But the choices are not always clear. For example, birdshot fired from a shotgun has excellent stopping power at close range and is less likely to pass through walls. But many home owners feel a shotgun is too cumbersome for their needs. A powerful handgun, however, is accurate at a much greater distance but a big bullet may pass through an intruder and continue on through an interior wall.
- The size of the frame and grip is an important consideration. Though a .45 caliber looks impressive and hits like a rhinoceros' fist, it may be too big for your hand and the recoil may be too great. On the other hand, the .32 doesn't hit as hard, but the recoil is minor and the butt fits your hand like a glove.
- Should you choose a revolver or an automatic? Many police departments are going to automatics but they do cost more, the ammunition is generally more expensive, and they are more complicated to use. If you choose an automatic—there are many excellent ones on the market—you will need more practice than with a revolver to get familiar with its safety mechanism, loading and unloading procedures,

and its different types of malfunctions. And remember, statistically, you will have do these things in darkness.

- There is no need to be overly concerned about how concealable your gun is since you will be stashing it around your home, not carrying it under your jacket.
- Choose a gun large enough so you can see the barrel in darkness. If you are holding a small derringer in your fist, you may not be able to see where you are aiming. With a longer barrel, you can use your peripheral vision and any available light to ensure your aim is where it should be. Also, the intruder is better able to see a large barrel and hopefully be intimidated.

"If a homeowner doesn't have the drop on me, I'll draw my gun and shoot him," says a burglar. "If he does have the drop on me, I'll wait until he does something careless, then shoot him. If he doesn't give me an opening, I'd let the cops take me away. I'm not stupid."

Practicing With Your Gun

Buying a gun, loading it, and sticking it in a dresser drawer without ever shooting it or familiarizing yourself with its specifics is a bad idea that just might come back to haunt you. Finding yourself face to face with an armed burglar is not the time to wonder where the safety is located or whether you put a round in the chamber. The intricacies of gun handling, loading and shooting should be practiced long before you ever have the misfortune of depending on your firearm to defend yourself or your family.

Find a shooting range and a qualified instructor to teach you gun safety, how to load and unload, foot stances, arm positions, hand grips and how to engage the target. Your goal is to be comfortable with your gun and skillful in its use. As one great marksman said, "The difference between a master shooter and an average shooter is practice."

After a few lessons shooting at paper targets, you are now prepared to confront any low-life that dares threaten your family, right? Wrong. Though shooting at paper targets will go a long way toward familiarizing yourself with the weapon and the mechanics of shooting, you will still be at a disadvantage in a real situation unless you practice specific exercises geared toward real combat. Remember this: how you practice is how you will perform in a real situation.

Keep It Simple

As in every fighting-art form, all concepts and techniques must be simple. Fighting, whether it's with fists, sticks or guns, is too explosive, too violent, and too fast to use complex and intricate techniques. Your response must be immediate, simple and to the point.

Here are some common elements found in real shooting situations that you need to keep in mind when practicing.

- Most shootings occur within 10 feet, rarely over 20.
- Shootings are fast, furious and last only a few seconds.
- Most shootings occur in the dark or in poorly lit conditions.
- You will be completely focused on the threat and will be oblivious to sights and sounds around you.
- You will probably thrust your weapon at arm's length and jerk furiously on the trigger.
- Because of stress and tension, your ability to perform small motor skills will be reduced.
- You will probably fire multiple times but think you only fired once or twice.

When you examine these points, it becomes obvious that real shooting situations are miles apart from the way you practiced when you were shooting at paper targets. The initial techniques you learned at the range: standing straight up, aiming carefully, taking lots of time to get your front sites on the target, proper breath control, and squeezing the trigger slowly, don't overlap to actual combat. Unfortunately, too many people stop their training at this point. Those are just the basics; now it's time to look at training for real.

How you practice is how you will perform in a real situation.

In order to respond in a combat mode, you must *practice for combat* repetitiously until the movements are ingrained in the subconscious mind. It takes time commitment, just like it did when you first learned to handle that other dangerous weapon, your car, but it's time well worth the effort. Actually, all it takes is about 30 minutes out of your day, 3 days a week for a month, or until the movements become natural.

Let's look at some easy exercises that will begin to condition you physically for a real shooting situation. They are rarely taught in shooting classes, but they ought to be. You can even practice some of them right in the comfort of your home.

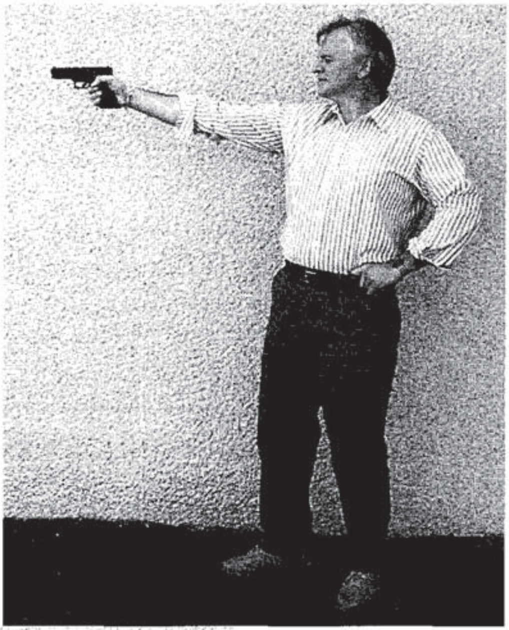
The Mirror

The bedroom or hall mirror is without a doubt one of the best training aids you can use to improve your shooting technique. Unlike your loyal friends, or your paid shooting instructor, the mirror will not give you false compliments. It reflects back exactly what you are doing, giving you immediate feedback of good and bad technique.

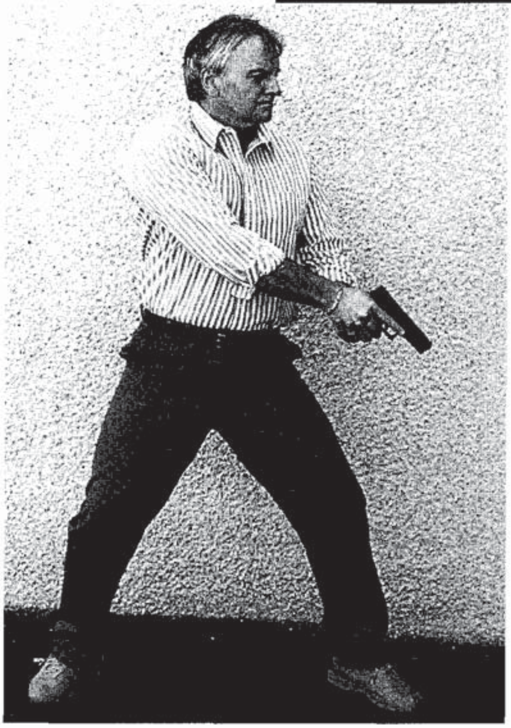
Practice all of the following techniques over and over, and make major and minor corrections as your reflection dictates. The mirror will miss nothing.

Strength Exercises Using The Mirror

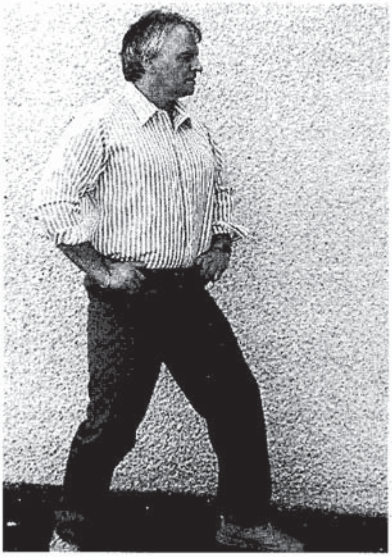
Here are two strength developing exercises that will solidify your combat stance and at the same time ingrain correct shooting postures into your subconscious mind. Though overall strength is always of value, developing the muscles of your legs and arms are especially important for establishing what is called a "locked on position." With practice of the following



Left. - Some instructors still teach such antiquated techniques as this upright shooting stance.

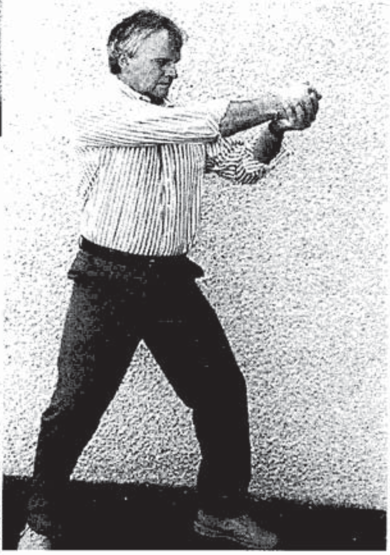


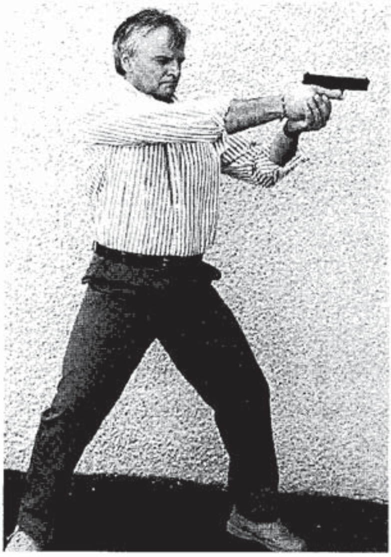
Right. - When the gun is held in depressed ready, it can be brought up on target faster and more accurately than lowering it from the side of the head.



Left. - To strengthen your legs, practice holding this crouched combat stance for several repetitions of 30 seconds.

Below. - To strengthen the arm position, tense all the muscles of both arms for sevral repetitions of 6 seconds.





Left. - After about three weeks you will notice a greater strength in your legs and arms.

easy-to-do exercises, you will be able to assume a good combat position like a well-oiled piece of machinery.

When you are suddenly threatened, you naturally lower your body into a crouch, what is sometimes called a "fight or flight" position. It's an automatic response whether you are empty handed, holding a pizza, or clutching a semi-auto pistol. Since it's natural, here is how to make it stronger for shooting.

Begin by assuming a crouched, staggered foot position, similar to a boxer's stance. To strengthen this position, you simply bend your knees until you begin to feel significant stress on the muscles of the legs. Hold that position for 30 seconds, straighten up to rest for 30 seconds, then lower yourself again for another 30 seconds. Repeat for 6-10 repetitions, 3 times a week, say, Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

To strengthen your arms, you can practice an easy but very effective exercise at the same time you work your legs. Begin by gripping your unloaded gun in your shooting hand and supporting it in the palm of your other hand, probably the same grip you learned at the range. Now, extend both arms as if you were going to shoot, then lower your body into your shooting crouch. Tense your hands, arms, shoulders, chest, back and stomach as hard as you can for six seconds.

Since the legs are larger and stronger than the arms, you will hold the crouch, working your legs, for 30 seconds while you tense all the other muscles for no more than 6 seconds.

Each repetition will go like this: drop into your stance, raise your arms and tense all your muscles. Lower your arms after 6 seconds to let them relax, but hold your crouch for another 14 seconds to keep working your legs.

Some people like to use wrist weights to add resistance —use no more than 2 or 3 pounds—when they practice the exercises. When the weights are removed after a couple of weeks, the gun feels virtually weightless and the lock-on is stronger than ever.

You will be amazed at how fast you will get results with these simple exercises. Your muscles will condition to the stance and your brain will automatically assume the correct shooting posture.

Use this stance whenever you shoot at the range. It's a good, strong stance that is based on your natural reflex.

Where To Shoot

This may be an unpleasant topic for you, but it's an important one. When considering a human being as a target, there are two myths that must be immediately dispelled.

First, don't even think about trying to shoot the gun out of the suspect's hand, or shooting only to wound his leg. Those are small, mobile targets that even under ideal conditions are difficult to hit, let alone in darkness and when you are frightened out of your wits. And never forget this piece of reality: *when you miss that small target, your bullet keeps on going until something or someone stops it.*

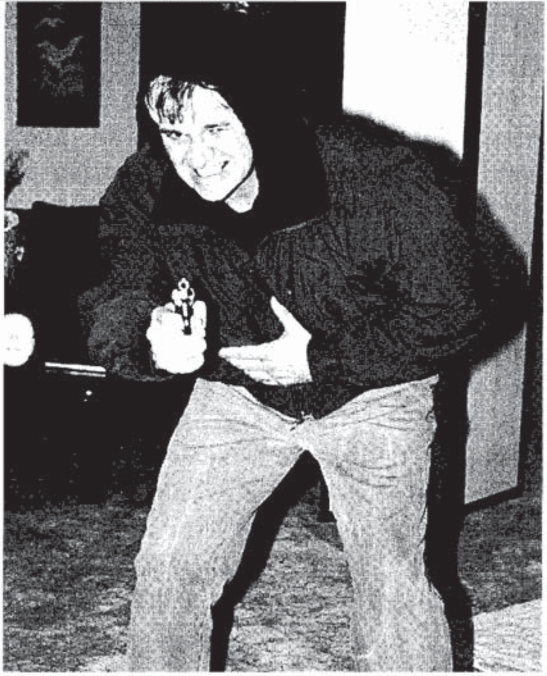
When you have to shoot at a human being, you are doing so because your life or someone else's life is at stake. In other words, if you don't shoot, someone close to you might die. Therefore, you must aim at the easiest target to hit, the one with the least possibility of the bullet missing and continuing on somewhere. Specifically, you must shoot at the largest mass: the chest or abdomen.

The second myth is that the assailant is going to drop instantly when your bullet hits him. Though it happens that way in the movies, in reality the assailant will probably stumble back from the impact then come right back at you.

A frequent comment uttered by police officers and citizens involved in shooting incidents is "I shot him in the chest several times but he wouldn't go down." People who say this are incredulous because movies have conditioned us into believing that the bad guy will always fall. But reality can be a nightmare, especially when the assailant shoots back in spite of the three rounds fired into him.

There are a number of reasons for this. If the suspect is under the influence of drugs or alcohol his senses may be too dulled to be affected by the bullet's shock power. A mentally deranged or an enraged person may also be impervious to the bullet's shock.

Left. - Would you really try to shoot the gun out of the intruder's hand as he stood in front of your child's bedroom?



Right. - Unlike in the movies, people who have been shot don't always instantly fall to the ground. Though this intruder has been shot in the stomach, notice his gun is still pointed at you.

To continue firing rounds into such a person is a waste of time, valuable time that might be used by the suspect to shoot you.

The solution? Shoot him in the head. A gruesome thought? Yes. But thinking about an assailant hurting your family is a worse thought. Shooting someone in the head is a necessity to stop the threat.

Know this: most head shots are going to drop an attacker, no matter what his mental condition.

Training For A Head Shot

It's easy to incorporate head shots into your training, whether you are at the range or dry firing in front of your mirror. One popular drill at the firing range begins by shooting twice at the suspect's belt. Two bullets to this area has a tendency to cause more damage and have greater stopping power than a chest hit. Double tap (shoot two quick rounds) to the torso, pause a half second to observe the target over your barrel, then fire two rounds to the head. The advantage here is that once you are on line with the larger target, you have only to raise your weapon vertically to be on target with his head.

Some instructors advocate one or two shots to the torso, lower the weapon to observe the damage, then, if there is still a threat, raise the weapon again to shoot at the head. This is not a good way to practice because it takes too much time to lower and raise your weapon. It's better to shoot twice to the abdomen, keep your gun pointed at the target, then observe over your gun barrel. Then if you need to shoot more rounds, all you have to do is raise your gun to the head. Time is critical in a shooting situation. Don't waste it on unnecessary moves.

You can also practice this simple drill in your mirror at home. Drop into your stance, dry fire twice at your reflection, pause, then raise your gun to your reflection's head and fire two more rounds.

The prospect of having to shoot someone is frightening to think about, and thinking about shooting bullets into someone's head is even more unpleasant. To be able to do so, it's absolutely paramount to accept the reality that you may have to do it to save yourself or your family.

Left. - Practice in the mirror and at the range shooting two quick rounds to the torso.

Right. - Two rounds to the head.

HOME DEFENSE

"We call them animals," says the East Coast policewoman. "They're just opportunists. They'll do anything. They go up and down apartment hallways knocking on doors. When they get in one and a woman is there, they'll rape her. It's just an after thought. It's just, `Well she's there, she's vulnerable, I might as well take her.' With these animals, these opportunists, if somebody is home, it's going to be a robbery, a rape, a homicide."

Pray that you never have to defend your home. If you have a choice, call the police because they are trained, experienced, have the right equipment, and are more likely to act professionally and objectively. On the other hand, you probably have little or no training, no experience, have only a gun, and since it's your home and your family at risk, you won't approach the situation objectively.

But what if the police are too long coming, or you are in a situation where there are no police available, or no way to alert them? You have to do something, and you had best know how.

Before You Fire That First Shot

Now that you have decided on a home gun, bought it, and practiced with it, there are still a few things you need to consider before you start pumping rounds inside your home.

First of all, you need to dig deep inside yourself and ask if you can you even do it. Take all the emotionalism out of the question and think of the act in terms of what it will be like. Calmly and objectively ask yourself if you can *really* shoot someone in your home? Imagine their blood splattering all over your walls and sofa, hearing their dying cough as their life twists and writhes to an end on your living room rug. Will you ever again be able to walk by that place in your home where a human being died at your hands? What if you kill him in your child's nursery? In your bedroom? Will those places ever be the same to you? Answer these questions, not with some puffed up bravado, but with honest consideration.

If you have strong inhibitors about taking another's life and there is *any* possibility you might hesitate or freeze at a critical moment, you need to strongly reconsider getting a gun. When you are standing there with one in your hand and the intruder has one in his, a moment of hesitation could cost you your life.

Another thing to think about is how you wake up. If you are the kind of person who is extremely groggy when you awaken, do you want to be making shoot/don't shoot decisions at that time? Every year innocent family members are shot by other family members who are too quick on the trigger. It's absolutely imperative that you are fully awake and have correctly identified the target before you engage it with a firearm. Are you capable of doing this?

The off-duty policeman was sleeping in bed when the sound of footsteps in the room awakened him. In one swift move, he pushed off the blanket, snatched his gun from the nightstand, and jammed the barrel into the startled face of his wife who was returning from the bathroom.

You also need to consider how dangerous a shootout in your home could be. It's worth mentioning again: *bullets that miss keep right on going*—through walls, over baby cribs, out windows and on to your neighbor's house. Control of your gunfire is critical; avoidance of having to shoot at all is paramount.

Preparing Yourself Mentally To Shoot

There are lots of naive people in this country who, in spite of daily news stories, are under the delusion that every person is kind and caring and would never ever hurt them. Wrong!.

There are indeed bad people, people who have no conscience, absolutely no feeling whatsoever about hurting you, your spouse or your children. These predators may know the difference between right and wrong, but will not hesitate to do horrible, dastardly things. They will shoot you, they will stab you, they will torture you, then go about the rest of their day as if they had done nothing more than swat a fly.

After forcing their way into the home, the three gang members gathered the mother, father and their three-year-old boy into the living room. One of the gangsters asked the parents where they kept their money. When the parents refused to answer, the gangster grabbed the little boy and sliced off one of his fingers. "Now," he said nonchalantly, holding the bloody knife over another of the child's fingers, "Where do you keep the money?"

If you have never been around violence, you must accept the fact that the world is a violent place and violence can happen to you. Accept the reality that some people can't be reasoned with; they can only be stopped with force. Accept the possibility that you might have to hurt or kill someone in your home.

When an intruder breaks in, you should be outraged. This is not the time to be thinking how unfortunate is the plight of the homeless, or what a terrible childhood the intruder must have had, how abused by his father he must have been, so that now he has no other choice but to steal your possessions to get drugs to feed his arm.

You must be thinking self-defense. This person has entered your home, your sanctuary. No one has a right to enter your very private space unless you ask them. How dare this animal, this predator, enter your home and violate your right to peace. How dare him threaten the safety of your life and your family's. You must think like a mother bear whose cubs are in danger of hunters: you must be ready to strike, ready to kill. You must rear up and take the fight to him.

A word about hesitation: *Don't.* If the situation calls for you to defend yourself, you must do so swiftly. You want the element of surprise; you want to take him off guard so quickly that he doesn't have a chance to react, or if he does, it will be too late.

It's important to use enough force to get the job done. In the movies, the bad guy always falls over after one shot. In reality, however, he will probably continue to advance and even shoot his weapon after he has been wounded. When you pull the trigger, know that you must continue pulling it until the threat stops. One shot might do it, or it might take ten.

The burglar, armed with two rifles, advanced on the officer who fired multiple shots into the man, one round tearing out a big portion of his heart. The burglar turned and ran around the building, up a short hill and across a lawn, then continued for 150 yards before what was left of his heart gave out. When he fell to the ground, he was still clutching the rifles.

You must be aware of using force where you shouldn't. If you over do it, that is, shoot the intruder as he flees, you might find yourself in trouble with the District Attorney. If the intruder surrenders after you get the drop on him, but you shoot him anyway, you will most likely be arrested. Do what must be done, but don't get yourself in trouble for using excessive force.

It's important that your family knows how to handle and shoot your firearm. Since you might not be home when the intruder comes in or he may incapacitate you first, talk with them about your home-defense philosophy. Teach them what the legal aspects are and help them get as mentally prepared as you.

Saferoom

A good home-defense plan includes having a saferoom in your home where you can gather all of your family in one place. When they are all in one room, you eliminate the chance of accidentally shooting a family member who was going to the kitchen for a snack.

Make sure everyone in your family knows which room is the saferoom and understand its basic concept. Teach any young children about it in such a way as not to frighten them.

The most obvious choice is the master bedroom where you will likely be when a midnight intruder breaks in. It works best when all of your family's bedrooms are on the same floor so they have easy and quick access to yours. In the event of an intruder, everyone gathers in the master bedroom and takes cover behind the bed or in a large closet.

Some home-defense experts favor the kitchen as a saferoom. Stoves, refrigerators and cupboards full of heavy kettles will better stop or deflect bullets than clothes closets, mattresses and a drawer of underwear. Whichever room you choose, it needs to be close and convenient for every family member.

When you call 911, tell the police where your family is hiding and where you think the intruder is. If you have a cordless phone or a cellular, that's even better. Phones are an invaluable tool

This family has gathered behind the bed in the master bedroom. Note the portable phone.

for your home security, and as inexpensive as they are, you might want to have one in every room of your home.

Can You Get Out Of The House?

Perhaps getting your family out of your house is the best response to an intruder. Is there a door or window that everyone can get to easily and quietly? Consider having everyone gather in the saferoom first, then escape outside.

Be alert for other intruders who may be hiding or acting as lookouts in your yard. Also keep in mind that dashing from the house could cause deadly confusion with the police. Even if you were unable to call 911, a neighbor may have witnessed the break-in and called. The police could be taking position outside your house when they suddenly see shadows dashing from the back. There have been many cases where mistaken identity has resulted in police officers shooting homeowners and homeowners shooting officers.

Whether to leave your home or remain in your saferoom is a decision only you can make given all the elements of the situation.

When You Go Looking For The Intruder

It's not advisable for you to go looking about your house for an intruder. Most likely you are not trained nor is anyone else in your family. Your best plan is to play it safe and let the police do it. But if the situation is such that you have to search, you must go forth with great caution.

First, gather all of your family in the saferoom and listen for noise. Was that the door to the den squeaking open? Was that the sound of a kitchen chair being pushed across the linoleum floor? Try to determine by the sounds if there is more than one intruder and where they are in your home.

If you start to leave your bedroom and you hear a noise, your best plan is to return to the bedroom, stay with your family and wait for the police from a position of advantage, such as behind a bed or large dresser.

But if for whatever reason you choose to proceed out into the house, you need to do so in a combat-ready mode. Don't stroll about whistling, flipping on lights or calling out "who's there?" Remember, you are taking the fight to the intruder; move accordingly.

Always maintain good balance. There is little tactical advantage to bending over at the waist as if you were moving through a tunnel. Such a position can be detrimental should the intruder jump you from the shadows. Instead, assume the upright crouch described in the shooting exercises, stepping forward with the front foot, then bringing up the rear foot.

Avoid holding your gun by your ear like some corny TV cop, a position that blocks your field of vision to the side. Instead, hold the gun downward at a 45 degree angle, what the police call "depressed ready." Studies show that holding a gun high then lowering it onto a target is less accurate than bringing it up from the depressed ready onto the target. And since the weapon is not next to your face, you have a greater field of vision.

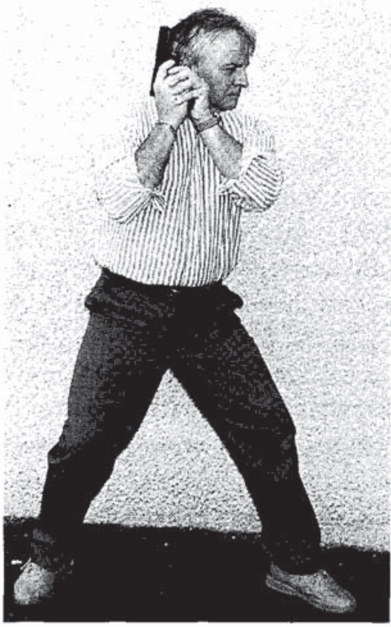
Know that most bullets can penetrate interior walls. That corner wall will conceal you but it won't stop bullets. So if you peak around the corner and the armed intruder sees you, stepping back behind the wall won't protect you should he start shooting.

If you rush about your house like a madman, you increase the chance of missing the intruder, an error that could be fatal. Check each room carefully before you move on to the next. When in a hallway, don't pass a room without checking it. When you approach a corner, "cut the pie" **(see diagram)**, keeping your gun at the depressed ready. Stay away from the corner in case the intruder is hugging the wall on the other side.

It's imperative that you move cautiously, quietly, and use cover.

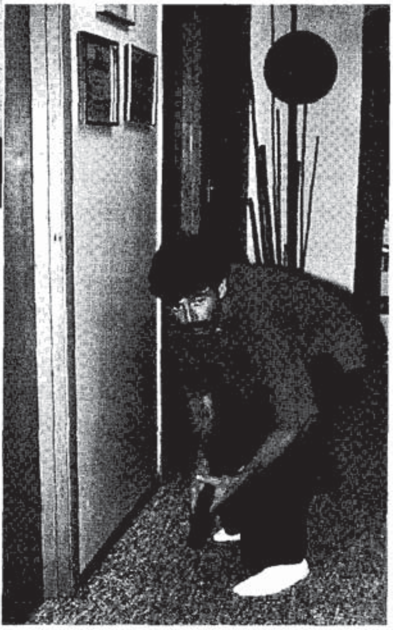
Shooting

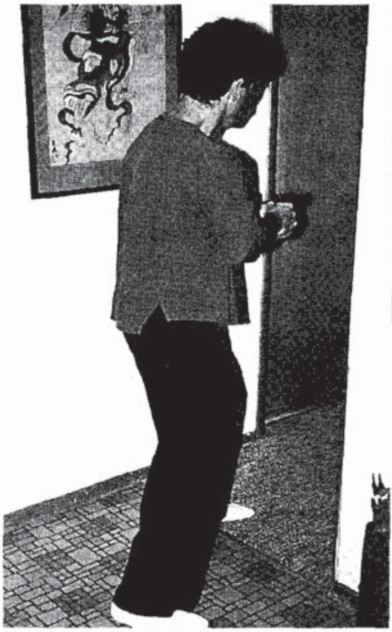
Think about this fact: *In shootouts, most bullets miss their intended targets.* A study by the New York City Police Department found that only 25 percent of bullets fired by police officers hit their target, and 11 percent of shots fired by bad guys hit



Left. - Never hold the gun by your ear, as seen on TV cop shows.

Below. - This bent over position places the home defender off balance. If an intruder suddenly burst out of the side door, the intruder could easily knock him over.

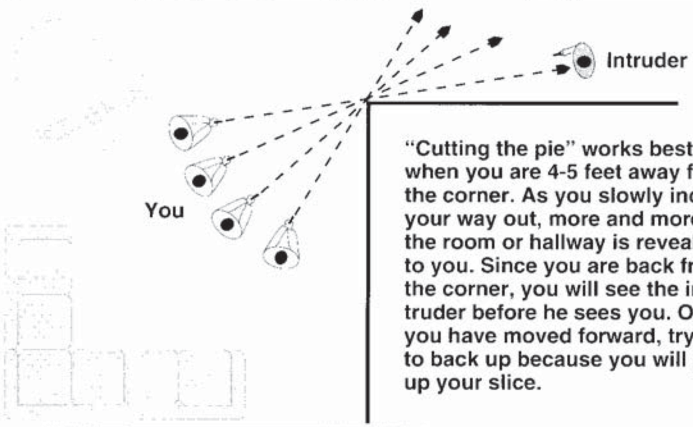




Left. - Stay upright, knees bent, gun at the depressed ready.

Left. - Never pass a room without checking it.

Right. - You don't have to be against a corner to see around it.



"Cutting the pie" works best when you are 4-5 feet away from the corner. As you slowly inch your way out, more and more of the room or hallway is revealed to you. Since you are back from the corner, you will see the intruder before he sees you. Once you have moved forward, try not to back up because you will give up your slice.

theirs. Interestingly, the study found there was no clear-cut relationship between a police officer's shooting score on the range and his skill in a real gun battle.

Be aware that the stress of the moment may cause you to have tunnel vision. You will see only the intruder, not the window behind him, the thin wall at his side, the open door to your child's room. Tunnel vision is a phenomena that happens to even the most experienced police officer functioning in high-stress situations.

If the situation has been ideal, you have been able to set yourself up to give yourself time to observe and determine the threat level. For example, from inside your closet or from behind your dresser you see the intruder, a gun in his hand, moving toward your child's room. Your gut instinct tells you that if you call out to him with the intention of distracting him, he will turn and shoot at you. If you let him continue into your child's room... well, you are not going to let that happen.

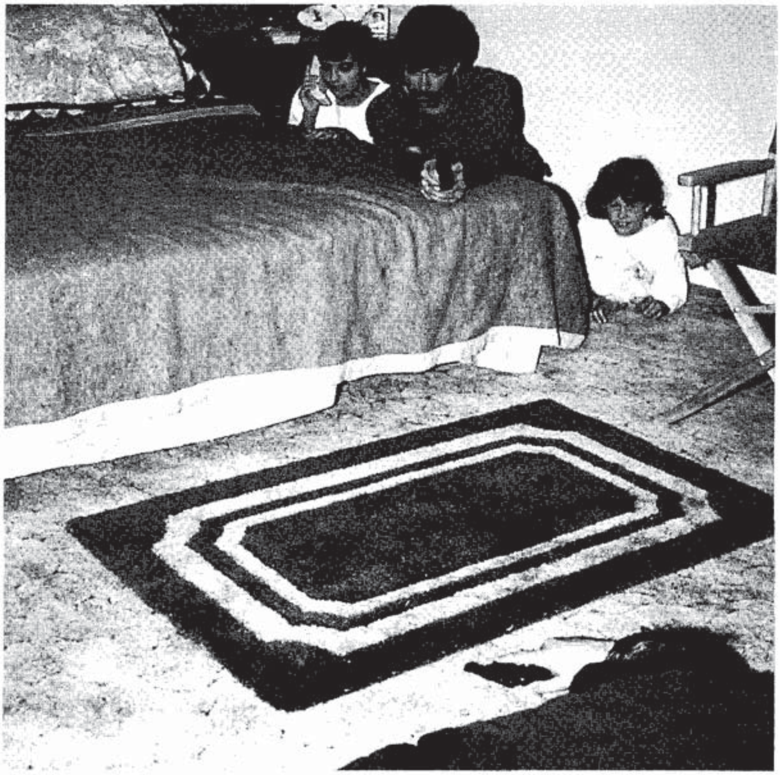
You decide to shoot. You want to take advantage of your first shot since it may be your only element of surprise. Zero in on the intruder and make a slow deliberate pull on the trigger, aiming for the largest mass of his body.

Double tap him. One shot may or not drop him, but with two shots the odds increase.

After you shoot, stay behind cover. You are going to be excited, probably more so than at any other time in your life. But you must stay in control. Never rush over to see how badly the intruder is hurt because he may still be able to shoot you, or there may be a second intruder who is mad that you shot his partner.

Stay behind cover, evaluate the situation, and collect yourself. If you can reach the phone, call the police and tell them what has taken place. Stay on the phone with the dispatcher and let him coordinate your actions with the arriving police cars.

If you are occupied with the intruder, have a family member call the police. It's a good idea for the caller to describe what you are wearing and your location in the home. Be sure to tell



If you have either talked the intruder down onto the floor or you have shot him, keep your weapon on him. Call 911. (For the sake of the photo other family members are visible. In reality they would be hugging the floor out of sight.)

the police that you have a weapon and it's trained on the intruder.

When the police arrive, keep your gun on the intruder and don't make any sudden moves. Realize that as the police enter into this scenario, they will see one person with a gun and another person bleeding all over the floor. Since they probably don't know you, they might think you are the burglar, which makes you a threat to them.

Immediately tell them it's your house and that the downed person is an intruder, then do whatever they say. They will probably tell you to drop your weapon, lay down on the floor, and they might even handcuff you. Go along with their orders; it will only take a few minutes until they iron out who is who.

Know that you will be interviewed by the police and taken to the police station. Though you shot in defense of yourself and your family, you nonetheless shot a human being, causing injury or death.

Even if the situation looks cut and dried to you, it's always a good idea to call an attorney.

Supplementing Your Gun

Here are a couple of other weapons you can use to supplement your gun. But using them requires some thought.

Chemical spray is a popular item sold for self-defense, but hair spray, oven cleaner, and deodorant sprays (spray, not roll-ons) are also effective. You simply hold your gun in one hand and the spray can in the other, giving you the option of spraying an assailant first before you start blasting with your gun.

The decision to spray first could be based on the environment you are in. For example, you might confront an intruder in your child's room, a place you definitely would want to avoid having to shoot. Spray can give you additional seconds to change your position. Or you might choose to spray first because you have strong reservations about using deadly force. Spraying can give you a little more time to evaluate the situation to determine if greater force is necessary.

But there are some negatives to supplementing your gun with chemical spray. Most police officers experienced with spray can relate at least one story of dousing themselves or other officers. If you spray yourself just as you confront an intruder, your situation will be bleak. When shopping for a chemical spray, look at some of the newer types with canisters designed with lids that make it next to impossible to spray yourself.

A second negative is that you could get confused under stress and shoot when you intended to spray or you may spray when you should have shot.

The police officer was eating a hotdog at a sidewalk deli when an armed man ran around the corner. The officer called for the *man to halt and drop his weapon. As the holdup man complied, the officer realized he was not only pointing his gun at the man but his hotdog as well.*

One final consideration is the possible legal hassle you could find yourself in should you shoot someone with your gun when you had the option of chemical spray in your other hand. The number one question you will be asked by the police and the district attorney will be: if you had a less lethal form of self-defense immediately available to you, why did you resort to the gun? What appears to you to be a clear case of justifiable self-defense, may suddenly get twisted around in court. More on chemical spray later.

Besides spray, you can also fill your empty hand with a hammer, club, vase, knife, or any other type of device with which you can poke, stab and hit. Though such devices will do the job and just might prevent you from having to shoot someone, you have to ask yourself if the additional weapon might get in the way or, as with chemical spray, make matters confusing.

If you decide to supplement with chemical spray or a clubbing weapon, give some advanced thought as to how they will be used. Practice some dry runs. Remember, how you practice is how you will perform in a real situation.

Should You Use A Flashlight?

Police firearm instructors teach a variety of positions in which the flashlight is held in one hand while the other hand holds a gun. Each position has one or more good points and one or more bad.

A position taught by many police departments for a long time has the shooter extending the flashlight out to his side at arm's length, while aiming the gun with the other hand. This was considered a good stance because it positioned the light away from the officer so that if the gunman was to shoot, he would shoot at the light. Over the years, however, many instructors have discarded the technique for three basic reasons: they discovered it lacked accuracy due to the problem of coordinating the light and the gun; it made one-hand shooting mandatory; and because of the spread arms, the position had a tendency to throw some shooters off balance.

Another method is to hold the gun and the flashlight side-by-side, pointing with both. This allows better coordination of the hands, thus keeping the light beam and the gun on the same objective. The argument against this is that the flashlight is held directly in front of your center mass, not a place where you want a gunman to shoot.

A third position which is being touted now, is to cross your arms in front of you at the wrists. Your shooting hand is on top, your flashlight hand underneath, the light held with an overhand grip. The shooting arm is supported by the flashlight arm so that the light beam and bullet trajectory line up.

As with the last position, the gun and light are held in front of the body mass, but exposure is reduced if you fluctuate the light. That is, press the light button for a second, then release it. With the light out, take a side step to the left or right, duck, or move to another position of cover. Activate the light again for a second, then release the button and move again.

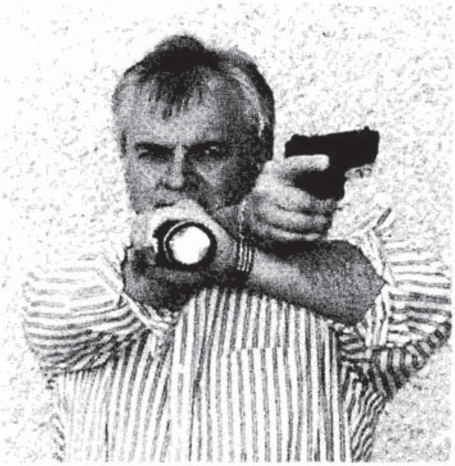
This is an especially effective technique when firing. Light up your target and shoot, turn off the light and quickly change position in the dark; activate the light and shoot, and again move under the cloak of darkness. Even though the light briefly reveals your position, you move when the light goes out. Then when you turn it on again, you have created an element of surprise.

When the intruder has a flashlight, you have some advantage. From your cover position, you can watch as he moves about flashing the beam and giving away his position. He has to use the flashlight since he doesn't know the location of your furniture, doorways, or hallways.

Since you do, darkness is now your friend.

Startling Him With A Lightswitch

You can use a light switch the same way a karate fighter uses a yell. When the intruder is in an area with a ceiling light that



The flashlight arm provides support for the shooting arm so the gun and the light are both pointed at the target. The light beam should be flicked on and off.

you can control from your position behind cover, turn it on suddenly and shout for him to freeze. Though the light will be harsh on your eyes too, the intruder will have to deal with its startle factor as well as its brightness. You should be at least ten feet away so you have time to react in the event he charges you.

Coming Home To An Intruder

If you see signs of entry as you arrive home, don't rush in since the intruder will have the advantage of cover as you enter through the door.

It's better to go to the neighbors and call the police, or let out your passenger to call while you park in a location that allows you to watch your house. If the intruder's car is in the driveway, consider blocking it with your car, then dashing to a place of cover to watch. If your arrival has been quiet, the intruder may not know he has been detected. This will give you time to call 911 and take up a good observation post.

If you see the thief leave your home with your property, consider shouting out that you have called the police. The ideal reaction is he will drop the items and flee. The worst reaction is he will panic and take a shot at you. If you decide to shout, do it from behind cover.

Don't shoot the intruder as he is leaving your home. Most state laws frown on homeowners shooting burglars who are not posing a threat to human life. This is especially true if the intruder is outside the house.

Answering The Door

It's not a good idea to ignore the doorbell and pretend you are not at home. Although most of the time you will be avoiding meeting a salesperson or a religious zealot, there may be that one time when it's a burglar.

Use your peephole, window, or intercom to see who wants you. If it's a stranger asking to use the phone, don't let him in. Instead, offer to make the call while he waits outside on the porch.

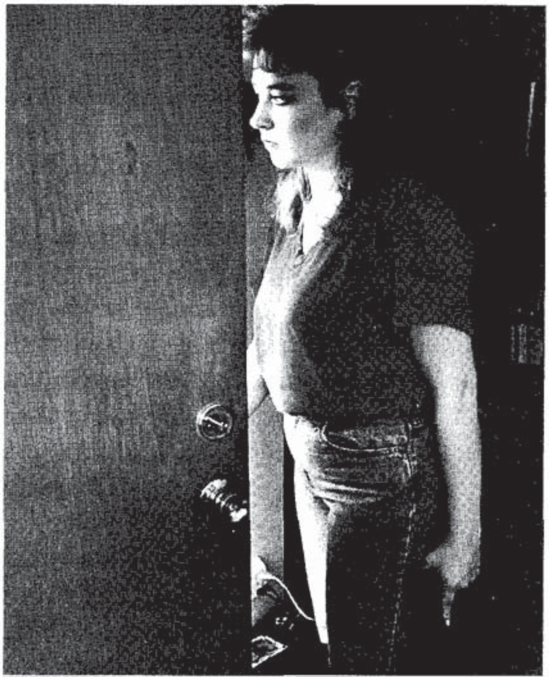
Intruders often pose as delivery persons, utility workers, even police officers. Always ask them to show their ID at the window or peephole, and never hesitate to call their companies to verify their legitimacy.

Responding to the doorbell, the woman looked through her peephole and saw three uniform police officers standing on her porch. When she opened the door, the three men, who had stolen the uniforms earlier, forced their way in, tied her up and went about burglarizing her home.

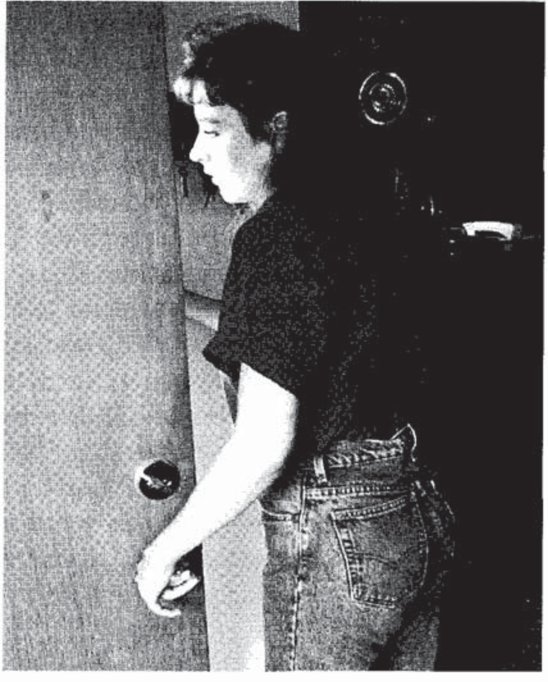
When a repairman is scheduled to come to your home, have a friend come over for coffee or use the ruse of asking the worker to speak softly so as not to awaken a day sleeper.

If you feel uncomfortable answering a midnight knock at your door, take your gun with you. Stand with your left side to the door and hold the gun along your right leg, or stick the weapon in your back waistband, or just hold it behind your back. It will be out of sight if it's your elderly neighbor, but it will be ready to go if it's an intruder.

Don't make your home-defense plan complicated. The more simple it is, the more smoothly you will perform under stress. Talk over your plan with your family and ensure that everyone in your home who is old enough to handle your weapon can do so with confidence and skill.



Top. - Consider answering the door with a gun held out of sight behind your leg.



Bottom. - Answer the door with your gun tucked into your waistband.

What To Say When You Got The Drop On Him

"Go ahead, make my day."

"Pardon me sir, but you're standing where I'm about to shoot."

"Prepare to meet your maker, dirt bag."

"Move and I'll make your head lonesome for your shoulders."

Clint Eastwood growls these things all the time, usually through clenched teeth and just moments before his industrial-sized gun pumps hot steel into some low-life's body. These are cute expressions, and a little funny, but are they really the words you want to say to someone you have in your gun sights? Can these little phrases come back to haunt you in criminal court?

When you are forced to use a firearm, it's because you have no other choice. It's a matter of life or death, a time not to get clever with your verbiage.

Let' say you are pointing your gun at a man you just caught coming out your front door carrying your stereo. You shout, "Move barf bag and I'll blow your head off!" He hesitates, your stereo still tucked under his arm. "Come on, scum bucket," you growl. "Do something so I can blow you out of your skivvies."

He drops your stereo, makes a move toward his jacket, and you fire three rounds into him.

Oh yes, there are two neighbors watching. When the police arrive, the neighbors say they heard you tell the burglar to move so you could shoot him. Then you did.

Later they tell the jury the same thing. Then when you get on the stand, you have to convince them you really shot in self-defense even though you told him to move so you could shoot him. Sure they were just words uttered during a stressful moment, but they will end up being critical to your case because they lend doubt to your claim of self-defense.

Oh yes, the burglar survived the shooting and is going to sue you. He claims all he wanted was your stereo, that he had no intention of going for his gun. He says you told him twice that if he moved you would shoot him, so when the stereo slipped from his grasp, he thought you would do exactly what you threatened. He went for his gun in a desperate act of self-defense against you.

There have been many times when criminals have claimed self-defense in shootouts with the police. They said they were frightened because the officers' demeanor and words were threatening to them. Some criminals have won their cases.

Without a doubt, shooting a human being is a most traumatic experience. It's bad enough having to go through the police investigation, the grand jury, and dealing with traumatic stress problems that occur even when a shooting is justified. It can be doubly traumatic if your choice of words during the incident confuses the situation, resulting in your being a suspect in a wrongful shooting.

Choose your words carefully, words that are easily understood and give clear direction. Phrases like "hold it," and "Freeze" are ambiguous and lack the punch that gets an immediate response.

Informed law enforcement agencies have found that fewer words are more effective. Perhaps the best choice is simply, "Don't move." It begins with an explosive "D" sound that linguists say immediately penetrates the brain. In fact, the New York Police Department has used the phrase for over 20 years, finding that the short, direct command gets the response they want.

Know that when your mind is busy thinking up a cute phrase and your mouth is uttering the words, your reaction time will be reduced because of the time it takes to mentally change gears. Let's say you are holding a suspect at gunpoint and he suddenly lunges for your gun. First, your eyes see the threatening move then send a message to your brain, your brain has to recognize the action as a threat, decide how to respond, then send a message to your muscles to take action.

When you are talking, the reaction time takes longer, especially if you are using long sentences. The two-word command, "Don't move" is better because your brain can concentrate on the suspect's reaction. Keep it short and easy to understand. If you need to give multiple commands, pause in between to give the suspect time to understand, and yourself time to react.

"Don't move." (pause) "Hands up." (pause) "One step to the left." (pause) "Stop." (pause) "Don't move."

Leave the cute stuff to Hollywood.

CHEMICAL SPRAYS

Chemical sprays are probably one of the best means of non-lethal self-defense on the market. When they work, they are an excellent tool to stop an aggressor without causing him injury but momentarily debilitating him so you can fight or flee. It's important to know, however, they are not all equally effective and none are 100 percent effective on every person sprayed.

Chemical agents have been used for hundreds of years to repel enemy forces. For example, around 300 B.C., the Chinese burned a blending of red pepper and oil in pots upwind of enemy armies. Ancient Japanese warriors would throw rice sacks filled with red pepper to burn their enemies' eyes, noses and mouths. Other types of chemical agents were used during the Civil War, World War I, II, and Vietnam, to slow, debilitate and kill.

In the 1970s, police departments began using a considerably less lethal type of chemical called Mace. It was an aerosol irritant found to be effective on most people except those under the influence of narcotics. In the early 1980s, the popular Oleoresin Capsicum was made available to police agencies and has become a popular choice of law enforcement and the general public.

A note on semantics. If you choose to research further into chemical sprays, know that the terms "tear gas" and "mace" have become generic names for what is actually chemical spray.

Let's look briefly at the most common types of chemical sprays.

- *Chloracetophenone* is commonly called "CN," a tear gas developed in Germany well over 100 years ago. For the past several decades, it has been used by the police, particularly for riot control.

CN causes extreme tearing, involuntary closing of the eyes, and a burning sensation on the skin, lasting about 20 minutes. About one out of ten persons are not effected by CN, either because of their intoxication or because they are mentally deranged. First Aid involves getting the recipient into fresh air and flushing his eyes with cool water.

- *Orthochlorobenzamalonitrile*, "CS," is an instant irritant to the eyes and causes a burning sensation to the skin within two seconds, both effects lasting around 20 minutes.

There are a few significant problems with CS that has made it unpopular with law enforcement.

- There is a lingering contamination which makes it difficult if not impossible to remain and function in the area.
- There is a high percentage of incidents where the spray is ineffective.
- The poor structure of the canister causes officers to accidentally spray themselves.
- There can be injuries from CS, especially skin blistering.
- *Tincture of Oleoresin Capsicum*, "OC," is called "pepper spray" because it's made from the resin of cayenne pepper. While CN and CS are chemical irritants, pepper spray is organic and an inflammatory agent. To work, it must be sprayed directly into an attacker's eyes, nose or mouth. It causes severe shortness of breath, involuntary closing of the eyes, extreme tearing, headache, and sometimes nausea.

"Over the counter" sprays have never been known to be lethal when used outdoors. However, there is a possibility that death could occur if a person was caught in a confined space where the contamination was so intense it replaced most of the oxygen.

Here are some other conditions that effect chemical spray.

- If the stream hits the attacker's chest or hair, the effect will be minor, if anything.
- If you are spraying outside, the effect may be less than inside a small room.
- If the weather is hot and windless, the effect will be more significant than if it's cold and windy.
- If the assailant remains in the contaminated area, the effects will be greater than if he is removed to where he can get fresh air.

Though advertisements for chemical sprays often claim that a sprayed assailant will drop immediately, the reality may be quite different. While some people will scream, cover their eyes and fall to the ground, others will be affected only mildly, a few will not be affected at all. There is no way to tell by looking at someone if they will be sensitive or tolerant.

How To Use It

Never warn an attacker that you are going to spray him. You don't want him to focus on the canister or try to get it away from you. Instead, surprise him.

The police are taught to spray with their weak hand, leaving their strong hand free to go for their gun if necessary. Though you probably won't have a gun on your hip, you still want to spray with your weak hand so your strong hand is free to block, grab or strike the assailant.

Never allow a potential assailant to get closer than 10-12 feet. When a person moves toward you in what you perceive to be a threatening manner, warn him to stop when he gets to the edge of your 10-12-foot safety line. If he ignores your command and comes into your space, you can only assume he intends to harm you. Spray him now.

Don't extend your arm all the way out because he just might grab your canister. Bring the can to eye level, arm bent, then spray. Watch the spray pattern and adjust your aim as necessary. Always aim for the face, specifically his eyes, nose and mouth.

Let him walk into the stream. Side step if you need to but keep the stream pointed at his face. If he turns his head away, follow him around, continuing to spray until he backs off in agony or drops to the ground.

Police spray in one-second bursts because they have other weapons and their training to fall back on. You most likely don't, so you should spray until the attacker is no longer a threat.

Since the area is going to be contaminated, don't stand around and admire your work. Run and call 911, or just keep running until the assailant is out of sight.

First Aid

If you should get a blast of spray, get out of the contaminated area immediately and into fresh air. Gently spray the face and eyes with cool water; a mist works best. Allow 30-40 minutes for complete recovery and know that it's going to be a miserable 30-40 minutes.

Carrying Your Spray

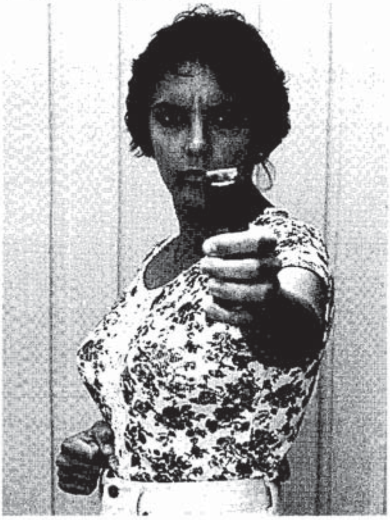
Your spray is a weapon that needs to be accessible; don't carry it in the bottom of your purse or in the trunk of your car. Most violent encounters are sudden and you won't have time to rummage around where you *think* you left it.

Carry the canister in your hand when you are in a potentially dangerous place or situation. For example, hold it in one hand while you unlock your car door with the other.

Maintenance

Check your canister periodically for damage and to make sure the nozzle is dust free and unclogged. Be careful about storing it in your car since interior temperatures can reach 120 degrees or more, and most sprays lose their effectiveness at that temperature. Some sprays, like pepper spray, must be shaken every two or three days.

Chemical spray is an effective self-defense weapon that is low cost, easy to carry and conceal, and when used correctly, can stop an aggressor in his tracks.



Left. - Hold chemical spray in your weak hand so you can use your strong hand to block, grab, or hit. Keep your shooting arm bent, and always aim for the eyes.

Below. - Have your spray ready as you unlock your car door with the other hand. Stay alert.

IMPROVISED SELF-DEFENSE WEAPONS

Part of being aware is being cognizant of common items that can be made into instant weapons in the event you have to defend yourself. Most people don't carry guns and knives on their person, nor are they highly trained in the martial arts. But there are common items just lying around that can instantly be made into effective, indeed deadly, weapons. But before you can use them for self-defense, you must first know they exist.

The damsel in distress is still a common theme in the movies. The cliche scene always has the poor female cowering helplessly in her home as the assailant rattles the doorknob at the front door. She gasps as his shadow passes across a window, she screams at a scraping noise at the back door.

Trembling and hugging herself, the audience is to believe that she is completely defenseless. Not so. She is standing next to a **table lamp** that would leave a nice dent in an assailant's head. When she scurries across the room, she passes by a desk where she keeps a **letter opener, stapler, scissors, potted plant, coffee mug,** and an assortment of **pens.**

Then she desperately flees into the kitchen where she again fails to notice a virtual arsenal of weapons, such as **knives, pots, pans, cast iron skillets, cups, coffee pot, meat cleaver,** and other kitchen helpers.

In a panic she runs throughout the house, never once considering the **bleach** in the pantry, the **Drano** under the sink, the **hedge clippers** in the garage, the **fireplace poker** in the living room, and dozens of other weapons available in every room of her house.

Look Around You Right Now

If you use your imagination, you will quickly discover lots of weapons within easy reach that can instantly be turned into effective, and in some cases, deadly weapons. The pen in your pocket can be used to gouge an arm, scrape a face, or poke ribs. That coffee cup and its hot contents can make an assailant think twice about continuing to bother you. The stool your feet are resting on can be used to ward off an attacker's deadly knife slashes.

The woman was in her kitchen ironing and watching television. She turned at the sound of the screen door opening behind her and saw a large man charge through the door toward her. Without hesitation, she swung the hot iron up and into his surprised face.

Walking Down The Street

Use your brief case to block a blow, smash an attacker's face, or strike him in the head or groin; your pocket pen can be used to poke, stab and scrape; your comb can rake across an attacker's face; your hat can be flicked into someone's eyes; your umbrella can poke and trip; your lunch box can smash his groin, and your heavy boots can kick his shins.

The wino advanced aggressively toward the middle-aged woman on the snow-dusted sidewalk. She told him several times to leave her alone as she backed up, but still he advanced. Realizing he was moving her toward an alleyway, she quickly pulled off one of her gloves and snapped it whip-like into the man's eyes. As he screamed and staggered back from the raging pain, she ran off to get help.

Use your bag of groceries to throw into an assailants face, or take out a can of soup and give him a couple of head blows from the makers of Campbell's Tomato Soup.

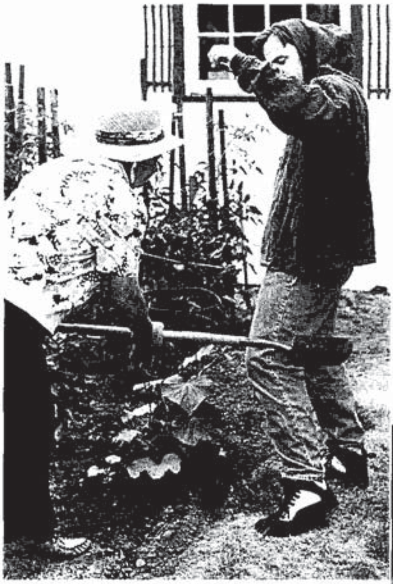
The elderly man struggled with the young street assailant for several seconds at the side of the grocery store. Twice, the assailant pushed the older man against a large, open, trash dumpster, hurting his back each time. When the assailant pushed a third time, the old man managed to twist aside so the assailant banged into the dumpster. Then, before the assailant could recover, the old man pulled the heavy dumpster lid down onto his fingers.

The best defense against someone getting into your car while you are inside, is to simply keep the doors locked. But some attackers, bent on getting at you, your purse, or the car itself, will break their way through a side window.

If all he wants is your possessions, let him have them. But you can still use your car horn as a weapon, not just to toot a couple of times (people are used to hearing short toots), but to blast away for as long as it takes to draw attention to your predicament. Remember, most criminals don't like the attention noise brings. But there are others, especially the mentally deranged, who don't care; these are the ones you will have to fight. Use the pen on your dash, the pop can, the cigarette lighter, the screwdriver. And while you are fighting, use your shoulder or your head to keep honking your horn.

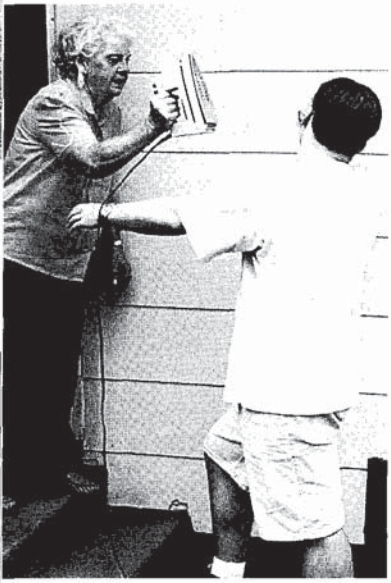
Look around your work space at the many items you could use should you be attacked on the job. If you operate a steamroller or a chainsaw for a living, you are potentially the baddest dude in town. If you are a seamstress, you are no slouch either. Either is the professional chef with his cleaver, the carpenter with his hammer, the electrician with his tool belt, the secretary with her mail opener, the boxboy with his box cutter, and so on.

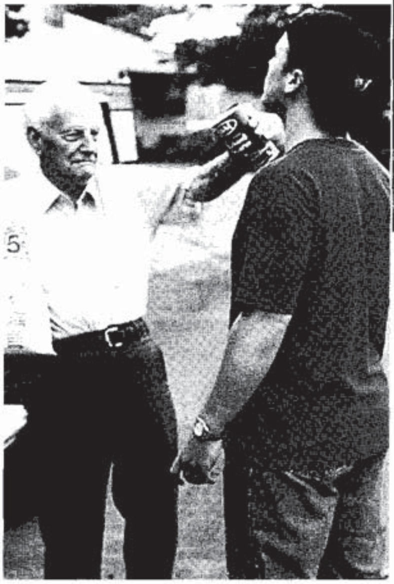
Confronted by an assailant, the man reached nervously for the semi-automatic pistol he carried in his waistband. When his



Left. - A gardener uses a shovel to deliver a nasty blow to a trespasser's leg.

Below. - This woman uses a common iron to strike an intruder.





Right. - A man uses a can of soup to thrust into an assailant's face.

shaky hand wrapped around the grip, he accidentally hit the trigger and sent a 9mm bullet through his genitals.

Carrying a gun on your person is an option, though most people would rather not. Guns are expensive, require considerable training, and they are an inconvenience to try to conceal under your clothing. There is also the possibility you could get arrested for using one. Remember the so-called New York subway "vigilante" who shot his three attackers? He was arrested and charged with carrying a firearm.

Some people argue that being arrested is not a consideration when it comes to their safety and their family's. They live by the axiom, "It's better to be tried by six than to be carried by six," meaning six jurors and six pall bearers.

Just keep in mind that besides guns, knives and chemical spray, there are always lots of potential legal "weapons" around you.

CITIZEN'S ARREST

After all this shooting, hitting, spraying, and poking with hat pins, this is a good time to comment on your right to make a citizen's arrest. The obvious question is, can you make a citizen's arrest?

Yes you can, but do you want to take the chance? What appears to be a simple, Constitutional right, could turn into a situation that could get you sued, hurt or killed.

Keep in mind that when a person breaks the law, he wants desperately to avoid detection and to avoid detention. So when you see someone commit a crime and confront him about it, he will probably be startled and angered. Though he might give up and go along with your arrest, there is also a chance your confrontation will set into motion his fight or flight adrenaline. Though he was detected, he may think that he still has a chance of avoiding detention, especially when he sees you not as an authority figure but an obstacle to his freedom. And unless you fill that shirt like Arnold Schwarzenneggar, he just might smack you in the ear with a chair.

When the police confront a suspect, they don't always know the danger potential, but they have the badge, experience, equipment, manpower, and communication capability to deal with any violence that might arise.

You should also consider this: your actions could get you sued.

When making a citizen's arrest, you have the right to use force to achieve custody, but only that amount necessary to hold the suspect—no more. No matter what detestable crime was committed—child molestation, expose, rape, ritualistic murder—you can't execute the punishment. You can't give him a punch in the nose or twist his arm extra hard, though some "street justice" would make you feel oh-so-good. Giving in to your urge will only set you up for a lawsuit that could take months, years, and destroy you emotionally and financially.

Here is another way you can be sued. Let's say you make an arrest but the case gets thrown out of court for one of a myriad reasons that good cases get thrown out these days. Your suspect will likely cry false arrest. If you used force and he was injured during your arrest, he will cry even louder. And it's a guarantee he will go after your wallet.

If in spite of all these warnings you still want to make a citizen's arrest, go no further than the apprehension. You are not a police officer so don't get involved in conducting an investigation of the crime. Your questions might taint witnesses' observations, and your poking around in the crime scene might destroy valuable evidence. Just hold onto the suspect for the police.

Check with your local jurisdiction as to what you can and can't do when making a citizen's arrest. Know that as a citizen you have a right to take action when you see a crime committed, but keep in mind there is an inherent risk involved, physically and civilly.

PART FOUR

CAR SAFETY

AUTO THEFT

There is nothing quite like walking out of a shopping mall with bundles in one hand and your car key in the other, only to discover an empty parking place where your car used to be. First there is disbelief: this didn't happen; I must have parked it somewhere else; Where did I park it? No, I know I parked it here. Your second emotion is anger: How could this happen? Damn those thieves! Why don't the cops do anything about car theft?

The man came out of the restaurant and found an empty parking place where he had parked. Later, as he sat in a police car reporting the incident to an officer, he could hear other officers on the scanner chasing his car. The thief eventually eluded the officers, but not before he struck several cars and a utility pole. The destroyed car was found two weeks later on a side street. All of the owner's business papers as well as his .45 caliber semi-auto were missing from the trunk.

Then comes the inconvenience. How am I going to get home? How do I get to work tomorrow? Where are my insurance papers?

Nearly 2 million victims of car theft experience these same emotions every year. In fact, three vehicles are stolen every minute in the United States causing victims great economic hardship, inconvenience, emotional trauma and increasing everyone's insurance premiums. Additionally, since stolen vehicles are frequently used for joyriding, it's common for inexperienced drivers to end up in injurious, sometimes fatal traffic accidents.

Though car theft can occur anywhere at anytime, studies of police crime reports show these places to be the most common.

- Car dealerships
- Driveways
- Streets
- Mass transient lots
- Shopping malls
- Parking lots

Many car thefts happen because of carelessness, the type of mistakes that make victims slap their foreheads and cry, "Why, why, why was I so stupid?"

Here are two "nevers" that should seem obvious, but are nonetheless common enough that car thieves take advantage of them every day in this country.

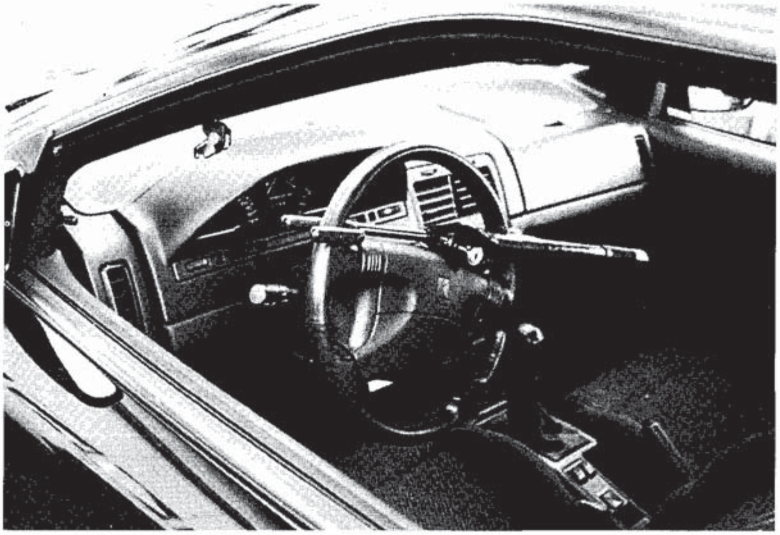
- Never leave your car motor running while you dash into the store.
- Never leave your keys in the ignition, under the floor mat, or above the visor.

Incredibly, over 200,000 vehicles are stolen each year in the United States as a result of drivers leaving their keys in the ignition. Not only is this carelessness an open invitation to car thieves, it can make you libel civilly. Car owners have been sued because their bad habits provided an opportunity for a car to be stolen which was then used as a getaway car in a crime, or in some way hurt or killed an innocent person.

Basic Security Measures

- Get an alarm system installed. There are many systems available on the market and every year they get more high-tech. Some of the newer ones come with a shock sensor, panic alarm, remote start, starter-system disabler, car-jack stopper, remote trunk opener, door lock opener, and door opener. Good systems cost under 200 dollars, while expensive systems can run into the hundreds.

- Steering wheel locks. Devices such as The Club and The Big Stick are effective because they can be easily seen from outside the vehicle, thus acting as a visual deterrent to the more spontaneous type car thief.



Devices that lock the steering wheel offer a good visual deterrent to car thieves.

- Participate in the CAT, Combat Auto Theft, program. CAT is a program where citizens register their vehicles with the police department or neighborhood crime prevention offices. The volunteers receive a decal to place on their vehicle's rear window. This tells the police it's owned by someone who doesn't drive between the hours of 1 am and 5 am. If the vehicle is seen by the police between these times, participation in CAT gives them consent to stop the car and not hold them liable for any action that takes place during the stop.

- Get a high-security sound system. Some of the new car stereos and CDs are easily removed so you can take them with you. Others are separately alarmed, or designed to go dead when removed, requiring a security code to reactivate them.

There are many good security devices on the market today that fit every budget. Get a good system, take sensible precautions and you just might not experience that gut wrenching sensation of finding your car not there.

CARJACKING

A woman in San Diego was pumping gas into her car early in the evening when, seemingly out of nowhere, a man approached her from behind and grabbed her by the throat. A moment later, he pushed her aside then sped off in her car. This was the seventh carjacking in the city in one weekend.

Two teenagers pulled a motorist from his car, threatening him at gunpoint. The motorist began to run away but was struck by a passing car, which sped away when the female driver saw the guns. The two teens jumped into the man's car, fired a bullet at him as he lay in the street, then roared off around a corner. Two minutes later they returned in the man's car, stopping next to him where he still lay in the street, and fired still more rounds at him before they roared away again.

The crime of carjacking occurs when a car is stolen after the owner is forced out or prevented from getting in by one or more armed thieves. In some cases the owner is kidnapped.

A federal law against carjacking was enacted in 1992 which specifies that a gun must be used for the crime to be technically called a carjacking. Some cities, like Portland, Oregon, consider the taking of any vehicle by force—gun, knife, club, or fists—a carjacking. Though the federal law has had some deterring effect, the crime continues around the country, often with fatal results.

A 34-year-old Washington DC woman became entangled in

An armed carjacker has opened this motorist's unlocked door and is pulling him out.

her seatbelt when two carjackers pushed her from her car. They then sped away in it, dragging her along the pavement for nearly two miles, killing her. A moment later they tossed her 22-month-old baby from the car. Miraculously the child was not injured.

During one recent year in Chicago alone, police reported more than 2,500 carjacking cases. In Detroit, where the term, "armed carjacking" originated, police reports show 62 carjacking cases in one month. In the beginning of the 1990s, there were approximately 20,000 carjackings a year in the United States. Crime experts expect the number to climb as it gets more and more media publicity which will educate more criminals as to how its done.

While anyone can be a carjacking victim, current statistics show that most crimes occur in crowded cities where there is a larger selection of vehicles and a greater number of escape routes. Women are attacked more than men, and lone women are the most vulnerable. Though thieves favor expensive cars, old beaters are taken too.

The Most Dangerous Places

Incidents of carjacking can happen anywhere, but most take place in these locations.

- Freeway ramps
- Gas stations
- Stop lights and stop signs
- Parking garages
- Parking lots

Two Japanese students stopped at a grocery store in Los Angeles. As they got out of their Honda Civic, a carjacker gunned down the young men and stole their car which was found the next day across town. That night the victims were removed from life support systems and died a short while later.

Safety Measures

The below recommendations will reduce the chance you will fall victim to carjacking.

- Plan your route before you leave. Use good, up-to-date maps, or ask friends or relatives the best route to take and which neighborhoods to avoid. If you are going into unfamiliar territory, try to take another person with you.
- Rental cars should not be marked to indicate they are rentals, such as a symbol on the license plate or the company name on the trunk or door. As a result of several

fatal carjackings, Florida has banned all identifying marks on rental cars.

- When walking to your car, look for anyone loitering nearby, especially at night and especially in parking structures. If you have chemical spray, now is the time to have it in your hand. As you approach your vehicle, be cognizant of the space underneath, and always glance in the back seat before you get in. If something doesn't look right, trust your gut feeling and keep on walking to a place where you can get help.
- Lock your car when driving. Carjacking victims are commonly pulled from their cars at stops. Automatic car locks are an excellent accessory which allows you to lock all of your doors with one button. If you rent cars for business, insist on ones with automatic door locks.
- Valuables should be placed in the trunk or under the seat. Don't advertise what you have by placing them on your dash or front seat. Be aware that as you grip the steering wheel, that flashy, expensive jewelry dangling from your wrist can be seen by an interested carjacker. Carjackers will not only strip you of your valuables, but take your car for their getaway afterwards. Consider this: if you have an expensive looking car, a thief will think the contents must be valuable, too.
- Be aware of your surroundings. Most people are so lost in thought as to where they are going or where they have been, they are unaware of what is going on around them. In Miami, carjackers often start tracking their victims from airport car rentals. Check your mirror continuously. Look ahead, behind, and to the sides.
- Leave room ahead of your car to escape. Although you can't control how close the car behind you stops from your rear bumper, you can control the distance you stop from the car in front. Don't stop so close you can't turn out of your lane.

- If bumped from behind, motion to the other driver to follow you to the nearest police or fire station, or any place where there are lots of people. Carjackers working together often use what is called the "bump-and-run" method, a technique where thieves bump their cars into the victim's car from behind. When the victim gets out to check the damage, the carjackers get out and take his car.

- When stopping to use a pay phone or an ATM, choose a well-lit, open area. Look around the immediate vicinity of the ATM as well as the parking lot before you get out. If something makes you feel uncomfortable, drive away and use another machine.

- Minimize your late night driving since most carjackings take place between 10 pm and 2 am when fewer people are around to help or witness.

- Don't leave your motor running when you use a pay phone or go into a convenience store.

- Don't stop to help stranded motorists. Drive to a telephone and call the police for them.

- If you get stranded, tie a white handkerchief around the antenna, then get back in your car. Don't roll down your window or get out when someone stops to help. Ask them through the rolled up window to call 911.

- Time the traffic lights to avoid stopping for a red light. Always try to keep your car moving.

- Be cautious whenever someone approaches your car for information. Keep your windows rolled up and your doors locked.

- If someone approaches aggressively, try not to panic. The calmer you remain, the better you can think.

- If pulled from your car or threatened at gunpoint, don't resist. They have the gun, you don't. Cooperate. Move

A white flag on the antenna is a universal sign of distress.

away as soon and as quickly as you are able and go call the police.

- Honk your horn and flash your lights to draw attention. Assailants, thieves and carjackers don't like the attention flashing lights and a steady blast of a car horn brings.
- Observe your surroundings before getting out of your car and be suspicious of anything that looks out of the norm. The hardest part of carjacking is getting the victim out of the car. If you get out without looking first and step right into a carjacker's hands, you have made his job easy. If something or someone looks suspicious, drive away.
- A car phone may be the best emergency device you can have.

A common ploy of carjackers is to approach a motorist who has stopped at a light, curb, or parking lot, and get the driver to roll down his window. Once the window is down, the carjacker simply reaches in, unlocks the door, and pulls the motorist out.

A national television program called *Case Closed: Crime Tips USA*, conducted an experiment where they used a convicted carjacker to demonstrate how easy it was to get people to lower their windows. As a hidden camera rolled, a rough looking man with a beard, long hair, and a black leather jacket, approached motorists at a stop light and tapped on their driver's side window. In spite of how rough he looked, an amazing 8 out of 10 people rolled their windows down to see what he wanted.

"All it takes is 10 seconds and your whole day can go wrong," says one active carjacker.

WHEN YOU DRIVE ALONE

If you have no choice but to drive alone, consider these alarming statistics. Over one-third of reported violent crimes occur on the street, in parking lots, and parking garages. Women were the victims of over 90,000 crimes on American highways in one recent year, crimes that include rape and carjackings.

The many safety tips discussed throughout this text will help keep you safe on the road. Knowing what to do, and using good common sense will go a long way to help you get to your destination safe and sound.

When Your Car Breaks Down

Stay in your car and wait for help. Unless you think there is a definite threat coming your way, don't crouch in your seat to hide. The police may assume your car is empty and pass on by.

Activate your emergency flashers and tie a white cloth to your antenna or door handle to draw the attention of the police. Get a weapon—chemical spray, crowbar, screwdriver—and keep it on the seat next to you.

If a tire blows out, consider driving on it until you can get to a safe place. Know that it will probably damage your wheel, so it's a decision you have to make given the level of danger you feel.

It's well worth the money to invest in an organization like the American Automobile Association (AAA), which offers emergency service anywhere.

A cellular telephone is another good investment, even if used only one time in an emergency.

When A Stranger Offers To Help

Remember, predators choose victims they believe to be vulnerable. A stranded motorist, especially a female, epitomizes vulnerability. When someone approaches your car and asks what the problem is, stay inside and keep the windows up. Ask the person to call for help, or open the hood from inside and let him look while you stay inside with the doors locked.

Ask him to show identification through the window. An assailant will not show it to you and will probably try to talk you out of wanting to see it. He might ask you to open the door, or use some kind of a ruse to get you outside.

Though your precautions might offend some Good Samaritans whose intentions are good, let them be offended; your safety comes first.

Another trick assailants and thieves have been using is to tap on a driver's window or call from the curb that the car has a flat tire or a burned out tail light. When the driver gets out to inspect the problem, the assailant assaults him, or jumps into the car and leaves.

If someone tells you there is a problem with your car, drive to a service station then get out to look.

When The Police Offer To Help

Check to ensure that the usual markings are on the police car, and the officer is wearing a proper uniform and has good identification. His car should have the name of the city, state or the county it's from, roof-top lights, and a spot light. There is often a slogan on the car, such as "To Serve And Protect," or "Police Call 911." The officer's badge will usually have the name of the city, county or state. Although there are numerous variations of police uniforms across the United States (some police officers now wear blue jeans with a uniform shirt), there should be a badge, shoulder patch and a name plate.

If the police car is unmarked, look for a flashing light, usually red or blue. Ask the officer to hold his badge and other identification next to your closed car window and take your time examining it. Even plain clothes officers are required to carry proper identification.

Police impersonators are not uncommon and often succeed even though they have an unmarked car, a poor looking uniform, and an unrealistic badge. People are fooled because they want to see the police so badly that they fail to recognize the most obvious signs of police impersonation.

Hitchhikers

The rule is simple: NEVER pick up hitchhikers or anyone you don't know.

Although there are thousands of reports to show that hitchhiking is dangerous to the hitchhiker, it can also be hazardous to pick one up. It's difficult to put up a defense when you are sitting behind the steering wheel, maneuvering the car through traffic. Good Samaritans have been robbed, beaten, raped and murdered after picking up hitchhikers.

Don't Say Too Much To Strangers

Be careful about giving too much information about yourself to people you don't know. The person sitting next to you at the diner may seem harmless, but then again maybe he isn't. Since you don't know for sure, avoid giving him any information about your driving status. Don't tell him you are driving alone to visit your sick grandmother. You can be polite and conversational, but be careful not to provide any information that could come back to haunt you down the road, or out in the parking lot on the way to your car.

Windows

It's not uncommon for people to be assaulted through their open car windows as they wait at a stoplight, their attention focused on the passing traffic. The first time they are aware a street person or an angry motorist is near is when they get struck in the face through the window.

This angry motorist takes advantage of a rolled-down window to assault another driver.

The man sat waiting for the stoplight to change when suddenly he was punched in the ear through his open window by a motorist he had cut off earlier. Before the man had a chance to recover from the first punch, he was struck several more times by the screaming and cursing assailant. Then the attacker grabbed the man around the head, pulled him through the window, and onto the ground where he continued to punch and kick him.

In stop-and-go traffic, keep your windows rolled up or opened just slightly. If it's a warm day, open all your windows an inch or so to get good air circulation, or keep them closed and use the air conditioner. It's usually safe to let your windows down on the freeway, in the country, or on long, non-stop stretches of road in the city. But remember to roll them up if you have to stop for construction or when entering an area with traffic controls.

Ask your mechanic about adding a plastic coating to your windows. This will prevent a thief from breaking your windows all the way out and reaching in to grab your valuables, or you.

Keep All Your Doors Locked

The same rule for car windows applies to car doors. Always keep them locked, especially in the city. Motorists are victimized everyday by assailants, robbers, carjackers, and rapists who seize the opportunity of an unlocked back door or passenger door.

An off-duty police officer on his way home at 1:00 am, sat at a stoplight watching several rowdy drunks cross the street in front of his car. When they got to the sidewalk, one of the men suddenly ran over and jerked open the officer's unlocked door and began to climb in, growling like an animal. The officer immediately pulled his weapon from a shoulder holster and pointed it at the assailant, who scrambled out, tripped over the curb and fell onto his back. The officer accelerated away as the man's friends chased after him.

Always Make Sure You Have Enough Gas

Here is a guarantee: you will never run out of gas in front of a service station. It almost always happens on a long stretch of freeway and usually at night when it's raining. It can be a frightening and dangerous predicament, especially when the nearest service station is miles away.

Keep gas in your tank, at least half full, and watch the gauge. Make a habit of looking at it every time you start your car and periodically as you drive. Make the half-tank mark the point where you add five dollars worth, or get it filled. Never put off getting gas.

The 48-year-old woman was driving alone to a business seminar in Albany, New York when she ran out of gas. A Michigan truck driver stopped under the guise of offering her assistance. Instead, he raped her then threw her from an overpass to her death.

Keep Your Car In Shape

Although most people keep their cars in better condition than their own bodies, it's still worth mentioning to keep the engine tuned and the tires in good shape. As is the case with an empty gas tank, cars never break down in front of a service station.

When Stopping At A Light

To prevent unwanted visitors, keep your doors locked, and the windows up. When the car is in gear, your reaction time will be reduced should you have to move in a hurry.

Try to time your approach at stop lights. If you see a red light ahead, slow down so it will change to green before you have to stop.

One assailant says he used to stand on the curb and look for women who had rolled down their passenger windows. When one would stop at the light, he would reach in and grab her purse. On one occasion, the "victim" drove off through the red light and dragged the assailant for twenty feet.

To prevent being surprised, stay alert and be aware of what is going on around you. Sing along with the radio if you must, but glance at the rearview mirror every few seconds to see what or who is behind you.

When You Are Being Followed

Say you have been checking your rearview mirror every few seconds and you notice the same car has been behind you for the past several turns. Stay on lit, busy streets and make two more turns to make sure. If you have a cellular phone, call 911 and tell the police what is going on, where you are, and what direction you are heading. Give them a description of your car, your license plate and as much of a description of the suspicious car as you are able, then follow the police operator's instructions.

There have been numerous instances where victims have been assaulted, raped and robbed right in their own driveway. Never drive home when you are being followed. Keep driving on busy streets and look for a police station, fire station, busy store, or any place where there are people and a phone. Even if there are people at your house who can help, don't show the angry motorist where you live.

When Forced Off The Road

If you are forced off the road, don't get out of the car. Make sure the doors are locked and the windows are up. Then lean on the horn, long and hard.

If a gunman demands your car, control your anger, and give it to him. Unlike your life, you can always get another car.

When Parking

Finding a parking place is sometimes as lucky and exciting as finding a twenty dollar bill. But when you have a choice of places to park, choose a place where there are lots of people and traffic around. Assailants and car prowlers are less likely to act out when there are witnesses present.

If you are in a car, try not to park next to a van, truck, bus or any other large vehicle. Car prowlers often target cars that are shielded from view by a larger vehicle.

"I hid between parked cars," says a convicted assailant and kidnapper named Miller. "I struck the moment the woman opened her car door." Miller suggests you drive up and down the parking lanes before choosing a parking place. "If you see someone hanging around between cars," he says, "park somewhere else. If it's a shopping mall or a bank, advise security."

Once you are parked, do a 360 degree search of your new surroundings before you get out. Is there anyone in the car next to you? The car in front? Behind? Do a quick check of the many hiding places each parking environment presents: parking structure support pillars, stairwells, sidewalk, building corners, trees, and so on. If anything catches your eye, or in anyway makes you feel uneasy, don't get out. Move to another location. Trust your "gut" feeling.

Always lock your car, even if you are just running into the convenience store to grab a paper. And never leave the engine running. As logical as that seems, people—*victims*—do it all the time and they are always shocked when they return from the store to find their parking place empty.

The young mother exited the store with her box of Pampers only to discover her car—which she had left unlocked, motor running, and with her baby in the back seat—gone. Two hours later, the police saw the car speeding and gave chase, not knowing there was a baby on board. Though the thief subsequently crashed the car, the baby was unharmed.

When Returning To Your Car

Let's say you have run your errands and are returning to your car. This is not the time to let your guard down since it's possible someone new may be in the area, or someone watched you get out earlier and has been waiting. As you walk toward your car, check your surroundings just as you did before you got out.

If you park in a highrise parking structure and are not planning on returning until after dark, consider carrying a large, heavy flashlight. Not only does it provide you with light, but it doubles nicely as a clubbing weapon.

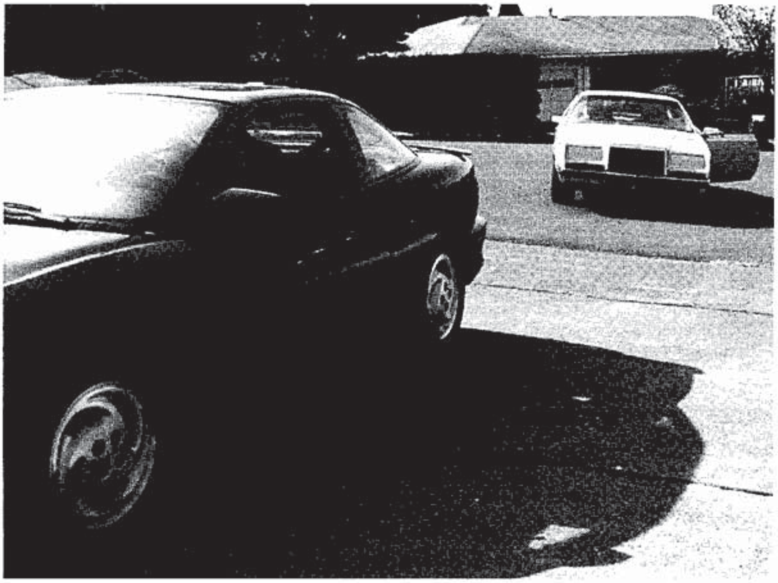
If you feel uncomfortable or see something suspicious, seek out a parking attendant, security guard or police officer to accompany you to your car.

Be sure to look in the front and back seat before you get in. Once in, lock the doors and keep the windows rolled up. Don't take the time to look for a cassette or light a cigarette. Immediately start your car and get rolling.

When Pulling Into Your Driveway

As you near your home, watch your rearview mirror for any vehicle that may be following. If there is one, don't go home. Drive to the nearest police or fire station, or any open business where there are lots of people and a telephone.

Visually scan the street as you approach your home and check



If you are being followed, don't go home.

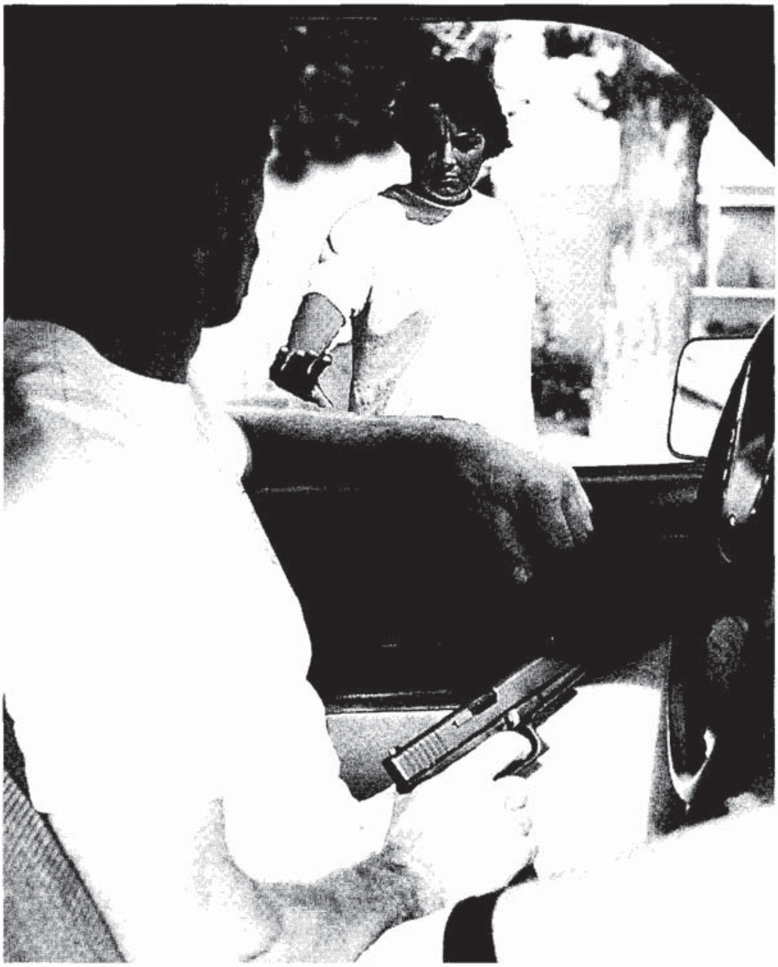
out your driveway, sides of your house, and surrounding greenery for anything out of the norm. Are there suspicious cars parked along the curb near your home? Is the garage door different from when you left it? Is the front door open? Is the dog running around the front yard when he is supposed to be in the fenced back yard?

Never Get Into A Predator's Car

The young woman was waiting for the bus on a busy street corner when the dirty sedan pulled to the curb in front of her. The passenger, without getting out, lifted his shirt so she could see his gun and ordered her to get in. She was released later outside of town, but not before she had been raped and beaten.

Every year in virtually every major city, men, women and children are found murdered in forests and in remote, secluded parts of town. These victims didn't start out in these places—they were driven there.

Never get into a predator's car even if he threatens you with a weapon. If someone pulls up to the curb and points a gun at you, run in the opposite direction and scream. If someone leaps from a car and tries to force you inside, scream, kick and punch like you are possessed by the devil. The odds of getting raped or killed right there on the street are extremely low, but once you



Even when threatened with a gun, you should never get into an assailant's car. Statistically he will not shoot you if you run away, but if you get in, the odds are high that you will be either raped or murdered.

have committed yourself inside the car, the odds increase to nearly 100 percent.

Keep in mind that streets, freeways, and parking lots provide predators with an endless source of targets and fast escape routes. Be alert as you get into your car, while driving, before getting out, and before getting back in again.

DEALING WITH AGGRESSIVE DRIVERS

The man flashed his headlights at the truck driver who had nearly hit him when he had passed. The truck driver let the man pass then began flashing his lights. When the man pulled to the side of the road and got out of his car, the truck driver leaned out his window, leveled a shotgun and fired twice, killing the man instantly.

Doesn't it seem as if motorists are more angry and violent now than they were just a few years ago? If newspaper headlines and police records are any indication, highway violence is definitely on the rise.

Why are so many drivers emotionally volatile and so quick to use their four-wheeled weapons to get even with other drivers? While many freeway commuters believe that drivers are frustrated over today's heavier traffic, psychiatrists say that drivers have always acted out because they have a sense of anonymity when inside the privacy of their vehicles. It's as if some drivers have two different personalities, said one psychiatrist. "The person who curses and challenges you on the freeway today, will be a charming person at a cocktail party tonight."

When two police officers were asked why drivers seem more volatile, each offered unique perspectives. "We are a video game culture," one twenty-two year veteran said. "People swoop back and forth across freeway lanes as if they were playing some space-war game on a giant video screen, and anyone who gets in their way is the enemy." Another policeman had a different view. "It's the coffee," he said. "Every corner has a late coffee shop that sells double and triple hits of caffeine, so lots of drivers are blasted out of their skulls. They have turned into aggressive, revenge driven highway villains high on strong coffee."

Whether it's due to strong coffee blends or some pop psychological explanation, the fact remains there are dangerous motorists out there and you need to be ready to take the necessary precautions should you run into one.

First, you need to recognize the potential danger signs.

Lane Swoopers

Swoopers are motorists who cut in and out of traffic like video spaceships darting about and dueling among the stars. They sweep from the far left lane to the far right, crossing three or four lanes with just enough clearance from your fender to raise the fine hairs on your neck. They never bother with turn signals because they swoop too fast and cross too many lanes for them to have any value.

If you see a swooper coming up behind you, slack off a little on your throttle to create distance between you and the vehicle to your front in the event he swoops in between. Maintain your speed so he will pass.

Since his driving is erratic and unpredictable, you need to be especially alert and ready to react. Watch the lane ahead as you normally do, but also watch the swooper and other motorists who may have to respond suddenly to the swooper's crazy driving.

Don't provoke a swooper by stomping on your brakes or cutting him off. Most likely he is an aggressive personality who will feel challenged by your antics and will want to retaliate. Don't get involved in a situation with him; don't let him make you anxious and sweaty. While he is in your freeway space, drive defensively without provoking him and in a few minutes he will move on out of your life.

Tailgaters

Tailgaters are usually aggressive, competitive personalities who, when taunted, become vindictive. Hitting your brakes and throwing things out your sunroof may give you a moment of sweet revenge, but it will probably add fuel to his fire.

The best way to deal with a tailgater is to just swallow your pride, move out of the way, and let him pass on out of your life.

The husband, wife and young daughter were returning home from a Christmas party when another motorist roared up behind them and began tailgating. After a few minutes, the tailgater pulled up along side the family and the two drivers exchanged angry words. The tailgater then pulled back and followed for a few minutes. Just as the family thought the situation was over, the tailgater fired several shots through their back window, striking the woman and killing her.

Say a swooper, tailgater or a car full of teenagers wanting to harass someone, begins to swerve at the side of your car, throw things at you, purposefully hit their brakes in front of you, or gesture for you to pull over. You need to stay as calm and in control as you are able and note their license plate, make of car and color. If you have a cellular phone call 911 with your location and suspect car information. Sometimes the sight of you talking on the phone will make them cease and go away. But if you don't have a cellular phone, keep driving. **Never pull over and confront the motorist.**

The police precinct desk officer was going over reports when a man frantically ran into the station and over to the officer's desk, shouting that a crazy driver was chasing him. A moment later, a second man burst through the door and leaped on the first man, pummeling him with his fists. After several officers pulled the two apart, they learned the incident had begun on the freeway miles away after the first man had cut in front of the second.

Realize that when the freeway swooper or tailgater passes you and disappears on down the freeway, your contact with them is over and will soon be forgotten. But if you let them anger you, and you respond in some fashion, you may create a situation that at the very least will upset you, or escalate into a tragedy.

The bottom line with irate or aggressive drivers is to give way. Don't honk, don't shout anything, and keep all five of your fingers wrapped around your steering column. The jerk will be out of your life in a few minutes and you will once again be a happy driver.

PART FIVE

RAPE

ACQUAINTANCE RAPE

All through history the act of rape has been controversial, at times divided into rapes that mattered and those that didn't. For the first few thousand years, the rape of a virgin was considered a crime against property, and since the property was considered damaged, the rapist had to repay the girl's father what her price would have brought in the market place. In early Babylonian and Hebrew societies, a raped woman was either stoned to death or drowned, the same punishment given to an adulteress. Under William the Conqueror, a rapist of a virgin was sentenced to castration and blinding unless the victim could be pressured into marrying him.

Today, rape is still controversial, still ugly, and often perceived in different ways by the general public, the rapist and, in some cases, the victim.

Most people are surprised to learn that seven out of ten rape victims know their attacker. Even with the proliferation of magazine articles, books, talk shows, academic research, and educational programs, many people still have the erroneous impression that rape is always committed by strangers lurking in the shrubs.

According to a study by The National Institute of Mental Health (NMIMH), the largest single group of rapes were described by women as perpetrated by "friends." After friends came husbands, then boyfriends. Roughly 9 percent of all rapes were committed by handymen, neighbors and co-workers.

This lack of knowledge of who rapists really are can cause women to lower their guard around men they know. In fact, because many women feel a false sense of comfort with a male acquaintance, they tend not to sense danger signals (or they just deny them) in a situation as quickly as they would with a total stranger. For example, a woman may not give her brother-in-law, who comes over on the weekend to help move a table, the same cautious consideration she would a man she didn't know.

There are people who argue that acquaintance-rape is just a "misunderstanding" between the man and woman. But NMIMH's study showed that in both acquaintance-rape and stranger-rape situations, 70 percent of the victims physically resisted. So why would victims of acquaintance-rape fight if the situation is just a mere misunderstanding?

When a woman in an acquaintance-rape situation finally does realize or accept what is happening, the situation is usually at the critical stage. Even then she may feel awkward and reluctant to get defensive for fear she may be wrong. She doesn't want to offend a "friend."

"I trusted everyone," says one woman who was brutally raped by a neighbor she had known for years.

This confusion can be seen in the study by NMIMH which found that when the rapist was an acquaintance, only 11 percent of the women screamed for help in the early stages of the incident, as compared to 31 percent of rapes where the attacker was a stranger. The same study also showed only half as many acquaintance-rape victims tried to run away in the early stages.

Keep this fact in mind: all acquaintance-rapes happen when a woman trusts a man too much. That is, at some point in the contact, the man misleads the woman into believing she is safe with him. It's most important, therefore, to be cautious and cognizant of any behavior or words that indicates your rights are being violated. It's sad you have to live in such a defensive mode, but failure to do so can result in sexual assault. Though there are no absolute techniques to avoid date rape, being less trusting is the best defensive measure you can take.

Learn To Trust Your Gut

"When the hair sticks up on the back of your neck, that's 200,000 years of evolution telling you something. Listen to it," says a veteran police detective.

If there is an absolute, it's that you must trust your gut feeling, that "sixth sense" that tells you something is wrong. Of course there is no such thing as a sixth sense, but rather your eyes, ears, conscious and subconscious mind, education and experiences all coming together to activate danger signals that flutter down your spine, stir the little hairs on the back of your neck, and set flashing red lights off in your brain. It's imperative you pay attention to these signals and not shrug them off with the thought, "Oh don't be silly. It's just good 'ol Bob."

Is there a chance you might be wrong in what you are perceiving? Could you be reading something into a situation that isn't there? Sure. But what is the worse that can happen if you are mistaken? You might offend good 'ol Bob and you might even embarrass yourself a little. But if your gut feeling is right, you will have saved yourself the physical, psychological and emotional trauma of rape.

"OK, maybe I was stupid, but I needed a ride home," says twenty-year-old Kim from her hospital bed. "He was in three of my classes at the community college and I'd talked to him maybe twice before. When he offered me a ride I thought, great. But I wasn't in his van two minutes when I started to get a weird feeling. He gave me a couple of those up and down looks that makes your skin crawl and asked if I wanted a beer from the back. That didn't sound bad but something was telling me I'd better get out. When I asked him to drop me off at the next light, he reached over and grabbed my breast.

Well, I just flashed red. I smacked his hand but he sped up *and went through a stop light. I was really scared now and I wasn't about to wait and see what he had planned. So I leaped out the door. We must have been going 40 or 45. I broke my wrist, an ankle and I'm scraped up pretty bad, but I got away from him."*

Kim was able to detect the man's signals and not a minute too soon. While another woman may have fought or made her escape after the van had stopped, Kim escaped when the moment was right for her. She could have waited, but maybe she would never have had another opportunity to escape and she would have been raped, beaten, perhaps murdered. We can't judge her decision because only she was there reading the danger signals. Though she was injured from her jump, she still feels good about the decision that prevented her from getting sexually assaulted.

What if the man had exhibited danger signals when he first offered her a ride, such as the way he looked at her or a mention of alcohol in the van. Many women, in spite of the signals, would have gone with him anyway for fear of offending him or not wanting to look like a frightened woman.

Go Ahead And Be Rude

You must develop a personal philosophy of not caring what the man thinks, especially when perceiving signals from him that make you feel uncomfortable. Your personal safety is more important than his feelings, even if he is innocent. No doubt he has had his feelings hurt before and survived, and he will again.

Another way to think about it is if the man had sexual assault on his mind and you perceived his intentions and avoided the situation, who gives a rip if he feels rejected. On the other hand, if you rejected a man who's intentions you misread, and he is offended by that, he must be stupid and unaware of the dangers women are faced with and you don't need him in your life anyway. Reacting to warning signals means that sometimes you are going to be rude. So be it. If Kim would have felt uncomfortable with the man before she had gotten into his van and had refused his ride, can it be said she was being rude knowing now what happened?

If you are concerned about being rude to people, you must strive to overcome this mindset in order to react appropriately to your perceptions. This may be a foreign way of thinking for you, especially if you have been raised strictly to always be polite and never offend, no matter what. But you must develop a personal philosophy of not accepting anyone violating your rights. You don't *owe* this man anything; in fact, you don't even owe him an explanation. It's not your responsibility to ensure he doesn't get offended.

"I'm not going after any woman who looks like she knows what's up," says one convicted rapist.

Go By Your Feelings, Not What Your Friends Think

Let's say there is a clerk at your corner store who has been flirting with you for months. For the past two or three weeks he has been asking you out, but you are getting warning signals. Maybe it's the way he looks at you, maybe it's the way you have seen him look at other women customers. Maybe his flirting is a little too sexual, or maybe it's the way he interrupts you as if what you have to say is not important. These are not big, glaring things, but they are enough to make you think twice about accepting his offer.

So you talk it over with your girlfriend. "Oh that guy," she says enthusiastically. "He's adorable, he's so cute. You're crazy if you don't go out with him. You're just being paranoid. What do you think he's going to do, rape you?"

Maybe, you just don't know. All you can do is go by the feelings **you** get when you see and talk with him. They are **your** feelings because **you** are there judging what **you** are experiencing from the contact. Trust your feelings, not your friend's opinion.

Run Like The Wind, Clothes Or No Clothes

Unfortunately, some women get raped because they are reluctant to flee a situation because their clothing is in disarray, torn or removed. This phenomena occurs in stranger-to-stranger rape as well as in acquaintance-rape situations. Many women would rather stay in a situation than run away with torn clothes.

You have to make the decision whether to run the risk of being gawked at, or stay in the situation. Those who have fled tell stories that run the gamut from being laughed at by passersby, to being treated with dignity and respect by others.

Consider this: no matter how the victims were viewed when they fled, by doing so they escaped rape.

Watch The Drink And The Drinker

In half of all acquaintance rapes, both victim and rapist had been drinking. Alcohol blunts inhibitions in the rapist giving him courage, and it dulls the alarm signals in the victim's brain. Even if you are a teetotaler, any contact with a man who has been drinking should immediately put you on guard.

Young women are especially vulnerable when drinking is involved. With maturity comes some knowledge of how much one can drink and what the effects are. Young people don't always have that knowledge, and as a result, can get themselves into a situation over their head. Know that alcohol effects your ability to sense danger.

Reluctance To Report The Incident

A large percentage of rape and attempted rape incidents go unreported. Whether the victim is a male or female, those who choose not to report the incident do so because they feel shame, fear they won't be believed, concern about reactions from their family, and/or because they want to put the incident behind them.

"I just want to forget the whole horrible thing," said a 20-year-old woman who had been raped, beaten and bit multi-

ple times by the assailant. "It doesn't bother me and I just want to get on with my life and not think about it anymore."

This woman's feelings are common among acquaintance-rape victims and even more so among attempted-rape victims.

Acquaintance-rapists often count on the victim's embarrassment and reluctance to report the incident. It's common for the man to say something like, "Hey, we know each other. Who is going to believe you?" This implants a sense of indecision in the woman that when coupled with her embarrassment for being "tricked" makes her not want to report the incident.

Deciding To Submit

Know that if you make the decision to give into to an acquaintance rapist, you are not giving consent. There is a huge difference between agreeing to have sex because you want to and submitting because you are afraid you will be hurt if you don't. Submitting out of fear is a survival technique.

If that is your decision, don't second guess yourself later. You submitted because his physical actions or his threats indicated in your mind that to refuse him would result in your being hurt. Fight the urge to mentally beat yourself later with "Why didn't I..." and "I should have..." You did what you did at that moment in time based on the information you had. You didn't *let* him rape you. You did it to survive.

DATE RAPE

There is no sure way to avoid date rape but there are numerous precautionary measures that have proven successful over and over again.

- Trust your gut feelings. This is one of the best built-in defenses going for you. When those alarm signals flash in your brain, it's imperative you pay attention to them. You have been on dates before where everything went fine and those signals didn't go off. So when they do flash, there is a reason for it. Trust your feelings.
- What messages are you sending? Say "yes" when you really mean yes, and "no" when you really mean no. Be aware of signals you are sending with your attitude, speech, posture, dress, eye contact and so on. Though it's your right to act, talk, and dress any way you want, be aware they might be sending out confusing messages to some men.
- Act independent on your date. Don't sit there like a bump on a log with no opinion as to where you go and what you do. Don't accept the stereotype that women should be passive. If you don't want to do something, say so. If you have to be assertive about it, know that it's Ok to be so, even if you have to be rude. Know that some men perceive passivity as acceptance and permission to continue what they are doing.
- Decide in advance if you are going to have sex. The sooner

you know what you are going to do, the sooner you can communicate your intentions to your date so he knows. Ambiguous intentions on your part can lead to problems.

- When the date starts to turn bad, let him know you don't like it. This is not the time to be passive or to wait for someone to come to your aid. Let him know loud and clear you don't like what is happening. Leave him and call a cab or a friend (always have phone and cab money).
- Use alcohol sensibly. Alcohol makes him braver and diminishes your ability to perceive danger signals.
- Avoid dates to secluded areas. It's not a good idea on a first date to go hiking into the mountains or to take a long trip to the beach. Get to know the person first by going on dates to places where there are other people.
- Meet your new date at the date site. If you are at all uncertain about a new date, take your own car and meet him at the restaurant or movie. With your car nearby, you will feel more independent and more free to leave if the date grows sour. If you take a cab to the date, make sure you have money to get back.
- Be cautious if you get invited to his house. Know it's never a good idea to go to a new date's house. Statistically, his home is the most likely place for problems to arise. It's his turf and he is very much in control.
- Just because he buys doesn't mean you are obligated to him. If you feel uncomfortable saying no to sex after he has paid for dinner, then pay your own way.
- Find out about your new date. Ask other women who know him or who have dated him. If you know him from school or work, observe him carefully to see how he acts, especially around women.
- First year college students beware. Time and time again, women who are new on campus are raped within the first

few weeks at weekend parties by senior classmen who want to score with new students.

Men To Look Out For

A rapist might be wearing a dirty pair of overalls or an expensive suit. He might be a gymnastic coach, the cable repairman, the step father, or the cute boy you have wanted to date all year. In other words, you can't tell a rapist by his looks. But some men exhibit certain characteristics indicative of a rapist.

- Don't trust a man who drinks excessively because he may turn mean and aggressive when you say no.
- A man who acts excessively jealous of your every move may become violent.
- A man who thinks women are subservient to him. If he thinks your role is to serve him, why should he respect your refusal to have sex?
- A man who makes all of the decisions on the date. A man who doesn't allow you any say in what you do and where you go, probably won't ask your permission to have sex.
- A man who has a lot of hostility toward women may react violently when you refuse his sexual advances.
- A rude man who talks over you and ignores what you have to say is clearly demonstrating a lack of respect for you. There is no reason to think he will respect your "no."

THE STAGES OF RAPE

Let's break down the act of date and acquaintance-rape into five stages and examine what you can do defensively in each of them.

The first stage is when you perceive discomforting signals from the man's actions and words. In the second stage, the attacker is just beginning to use force by grabbing, pushing or preventing you from leaving. The third stage is physical assault but not sexual assault, that is, the attacker is hitting and violently restraining you. In the fourth stage, the attacker is engaging in forced sex. The fifth stage is when the physical rape is over but the attacker is still present.

The Issue Of Force

You have the option of resisting or not resisting a rapist, a decision only you can make based on the totality of the situation and your personal philosophy. Some women have long decided they will resist no matter what, some have decided they will never fight back, and others have told themselves they will make a decision at the time based on all the elements in the situation.

There are a few non-force techniques that have occasionally worked for women, such at shouting "fire"!, pretending to pass out, claiming to be on their period, claiming to have a sexually transmitted disease, and begging and crying. Regarding the latter two, know that since the rapist wants to control and dominate you, begging and crying, in many cases, will reinforce his fantasies.

Statistics show that women who resist physically are less likely to be raped as opposed to those who beg their attackers for mercy, cry, or just go along with the attack. Although fighting might drive the attacker to greater violence, the victim who goes along with the rape just might be beaten anyway. Studies show that most victims of rape who got injured didn't physically resist the attack.

Resisting In The Five Stages

Stage One

In this stage, your male acquaintance has been sending out subtle and not so subtle verbal and physical messages that have made you feel uncomfortable. Believe in your feelings and refuse his ride after work, or say no to his offer to help you move boxes out of your basement.

When your first-time date says and does things that set off your warning signals, you can feign illness or just tell him you don't like what he is saying and doing. Then tell him you want to go home or back to your car.

It's important to show strength in this stage. Show him through your language and your demeanor that you mean no and your decision is not up for debate.

Stage Two

In this stage, his intentions are clear and the situation is beginning to get physical. Either he didn't give off any signals for you to alert on, or you missed them. But now he is verbally telling you his intentions, or rubbing your shoulder, or pushing you back against the sofa with his chest.

First, try to stay calm. Granted this is easier said than done, but by remaining calm, you will be able to think more clearly and react better physically.

Say "no" forcefully. This is not the time to be polite or wishy washy. A strong "no" may be enough to shock him into stopping. Make it absolutely clear what you want. Some women have found success by saying powerful words that have shock value, such as, "Stop. This is rape." What he does after you say "stop" will be extremely important to the police and to the jury.

The moment you realize you are in Stage Two, look for an avenue of escape. See if there is a specific place to run, such as a store, restaurant, or to a group of people. If you are in a vehicle, the best time to escape might be at a stop light. Or you might use the ruse of asking to get beer, then escape at the store. If you are on foot, use a distraction such as a passing car to make your break. If you are inside a house, pretend to go along with his advances then fake illness, escaping when you go to the bathroom. If you are in an apartment and hear people in the hall, cry out loudly and run for the door.

Stage Three

In this stage, the attacker is assaultive. Commonly he will begin by using one or more of these techniques: clamp a hand over your mouth, choke you, knock you down, and/or threaten with a weapon. He uses force not only to weaken you for the rape, but to enact his fantasy.

If you have not resisted up to this point, consider doing so now. If he is hitting you and choking you, you may quickly be so weakened that you are unable to put up resistance. Consider these physical implications of common assaults used in rape attacks.

- A hard slap to your face can stun the many vulnerable nerves just under the skin. The blow can cause pain, confusion, blurred vision, and even unconsciousness. A slap against the ear can cause a sensation like a small explosion in your head. A slap across your nose and eyes can make them water so intensely that you become temporarily blind.
- Many rapes begin with a choke, usually from behind. A windpipe choke—pressure across the front of the

throat—will set off an immediate sense of panic and a feeling of impending death. A carotid artery choke, pressure applied against the arteries of the neck, can cause unconsciousness in as little as five seconds.

- Getting knocked to the ground places you at a disadvantage because your mobility and strength are reduced. Unless you are trained, it's hard to fight from the ground and much harder to block your assailant's blows.
- A knife is used most often to threaten and intimidate. When you are cut, you experience pain, shock and, depending on the wound, debilitation. The same is true when shot or struck with a club.
- Rapists often place their hand over the victim's mouth. In stranger to stranger rape this usually occurs from behind. With date and acquaintance-rape, the attacker covers the victim's mouth and straddles her, creating a strong sense of helpless and of being smothered.

These common physical preludes to rape point out the glaring weaknesses in many self-defense classes. But before we get into that, let's look at the next stage.

Stage Four

In Stage Four the rape has begun. When things have gone this far it's because you have been subdued by the rapist's size and strength, his deadly weapon, your injury, or you have decided to submit.

If he is threatening you with a firearm or a knife, go along with him until an opportunity presents itself for you to attack him. Most practical, street-wise martial arts instructors will tell you to do whatever the armed assailant says. Only attempt to disarm when you are absolutely convinced you are going to be killed and there are no other options.

Depending on the act, there are a variety of positions you may be forced into. You could be on your back, stomach, kneeling, standing, or in any variation of these positions that places you and the rapist at different heights and angles to each other. The position may change several times.

If you have been overpowered due to his size and strength, or you have been weakened from his assault, you will have to use specific techniques to fight back, techniques that require little strength, yet cause acute pain and debilitation, such as eye gouges, strikes to his throat, and squeezing of his genitals.

Stage Five

In Stage Five the physical act is over, at least for the moment. Many victims are raped multiple times before they are released or manage to escape. Some victims are forced to stay in a basement or a back room where they are raped by several rapists over a number of hours or days. Some never escape alive, but fortunately those instances are rare.

One thing that can be counted on is that you can't count on what a rapist is going to do when he is finished.

One man forced a woman into his car and drove her to a location where he raped her. When he finished, he drove her back to where he had picked her up. Before he let her out of the car, he gave her his business card and told her to call him sometime.

The rapist may roll over afterwards and have a cigarette, or he may punch you in the face and flee out the door. It's not uncommon for women who have been raped in a car to be thrown out as it speeds away.

One woman was beaten and raped multiple times in a park. Afterwards, thinking she was dead, the rapist covered her with leaves. She was found the next day and survived to testify against the rapist.

If the rapist flees the scene, you need to get out of the vicinity in the event he returns. Though you may be injured and in shock, you must draw upon all your inner strength to leave.

If he remains, he may be thinking of raping you again. The variables are many, so your offense and escape is dependant on where he is, where the avenue of escape is, and what objects are available to use as weapons.

Let's look at the issue of self-defense.

The Reality Of Fighting

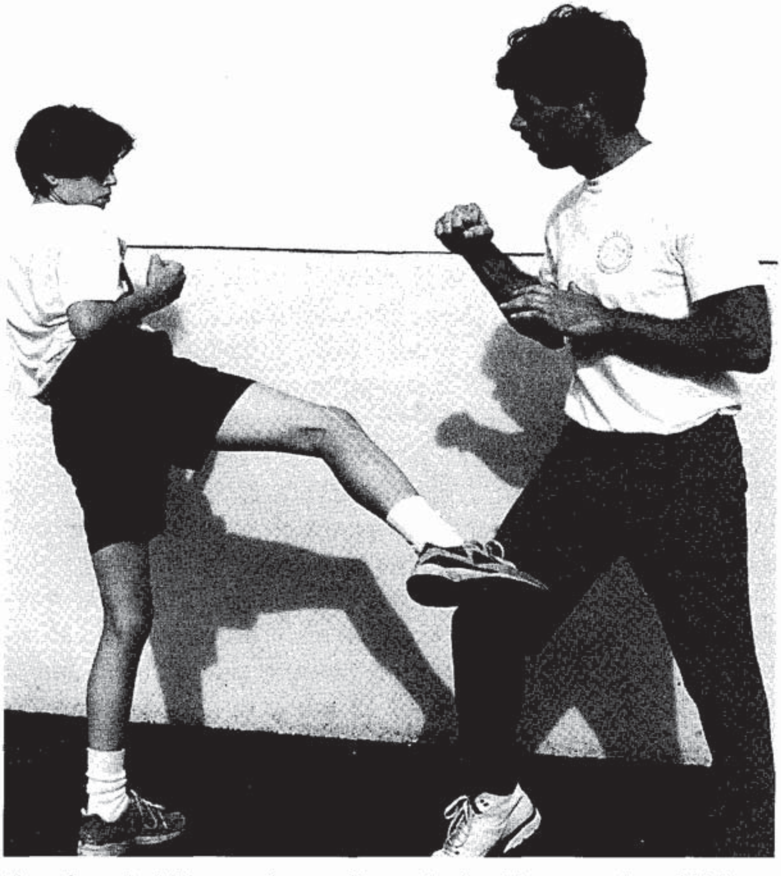
As discussed earlier, some women have already decided they won't fight back. There are many personal issues that go into this decision and friends and relatives should never criticize a woman for what she believes is best for her. Other women feel deeply that fighting back is the best course to take. They too have come to this decision based on personal beliefs and self-knowledge as to their strengths, both physical and mental.

Women who have made the decision to fight need to know how. The old axiom "I know just enough self-defense to get me hurt" may prove to be true if the training is improper. There are hundreds of martial arts schools across the country, some excellent, some good, some poor. Unfortunately, even the excellent schools may offer rape prevention programs not applicable to the specific needs of rape self-defense.

All too often, well-meaning instructors teach techniques that fit their stereotypical views of rape. For example, many programs rely on the good-ol'-kick-to-the groin as a staple technique. As much as a solid kick there hurts, it's not an easy target to hit and, surprisingly, some men are not effected by it. Additionally, men are highly protective of their groin area and it's probably safe to assume that men who are about to rape are even more protective of it. To avoid being struck there, all it takes is a subtle turn of the body and the kicking foot strikes the hip.

The woman, a karate black belt, stepped in front of the thief to prevent him from leaving with her car stereo. The thief dropped the stereo and raised his hands as if to fight. The woman *snapped a lightning-quick kick to the thief's groin, but he turned his front leg inward, taking the kick on his thigh, then turned and run off.*

The problem with relying on the groin kick is that the rapist has to be positioned with his legs spread somewhat, and you must be at a proper angle to smash the testicles up into the pelvic area. If those conditions are not present, the kick just might enrage the rapist more. Though many rape-prevention classes practice kicking an attacker who is poised directly in front of the victim, statistics show that 70 percent of rapes begin



Though groin kicks are frequently emphasized in women's self-defense classes, it's actually an easy target to miss.

with an attack from behind. Even if you get turned around, you might be too close to kick.

Consideration also needs to be given to the numerous positions you may be in—seated, supine, kneeling, prone—and the many locations a rape can take place—cramped car, narrow hallway, littered alleyway, small apartment. Given the various stages, postures and venues, emphasizing one technique is not wise.

One Effective Program

Here are the physical rudiments of one rape-defense program that teaches techniques and concepts that can be modified to work in any situation. It's designed for women who are not martial artists and may not be in the best physical condition. It's simple, effective and most importantly, most women feel comfortable with the techniques in just a couple of hours.

The premise is that no matter how an attacker grabs you, he always exposes vulnerable targets somewhere on his body. For example, if he grabs your arm, his legs are vulnerable to be kicked, his eyes are open to be clawed, his throat is right there to be struck, and so on. If he grabs your neck with both hands, his groin, eyes, shins, inner thighs and stomach are all exposed. If he grabs you from behind and pulls, you may or may not be able to strike him immediately, but he will eventually stop pulling and it's then that you strike out at whatever is available.

Yelling has been used in the martial arts for hundreds of years to startle an assailant and add power to techniques. For our purposes here, yelling serves two goals.

First, it draws attention to what is going on. Criminals, such as burglars and rapists, prefer to do their crimes quietly so as not to draw attention. When you shout in that hallway, apartment, or car, you want to bring attention to what is going on. But even if it doesn't, the rapist may run off for fear that it will.

Secondly, yelling as you deliver a blow forces a sudden exhalation of air caused by a tensing of the abdomen muscles. This allows you to focus your strength at the point of your technique's contact, thus increasing its impact.

The techniques in this program are simple and based on movements most people can do naturally.

Kicking

The front kick is a natural move that involves kicking forward with the ball of the foot as if you were kicking at a door. It's especially effective when aimed at the rapist's shin, knee, thigh, groin and stomach. Though high kicks look dramatic in the movies, never kick to the head unless the rapist is on the ground.

The side kick is delivered in a stomping fashion to your side as if you were kicking something out of your way. Hit with the heel portion of your foot as you kick the rapists instep, shin or knee.

The back kick is delivered like a mule's kick, again striking with the heel portion of your foot since it's the strongest. When the rapist grabs you from behind, use the kick to kick back into his shin, stomp down on his foot, or onto his instep.

The slap kick is delivered with the top of the foot, the portion covered by the laces of your shoe. The slap kick is most effective against the groin and is delivered by snapping the foot upward as if kicking a football.

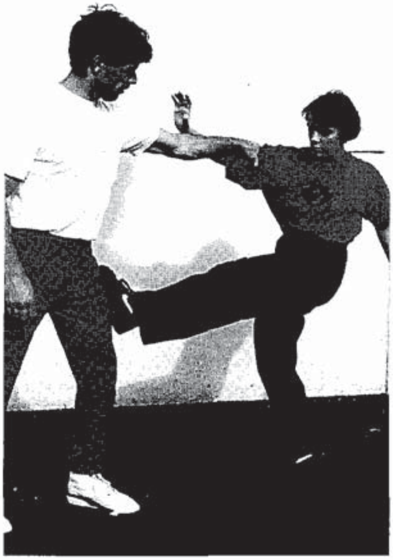
Hands

The palm strike is delivered with the palm portion of the hand after you pull your fingers back to get them out of the way. You can thrust straight forward into his face, slap in a roundhouse fashion against his ear, bring it down against his nose, or swing it upward into his groin.

The fingers can be used to poke, claw, gouge and thrust to the rapist's face and eyes. You can thrust straight forward, rake them in a roundhouse fashion, or use them to claw upwards or downwards.

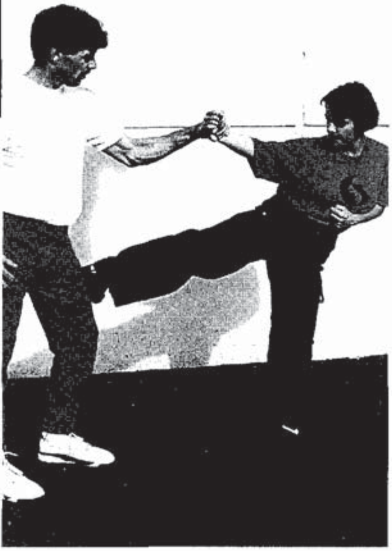
The hammer fist uses the portion of your hand you would use to pound a table top. The blow is powerful and can be used to hammer downward onto the rapist's face and neck, or slam horizontally into his ear.

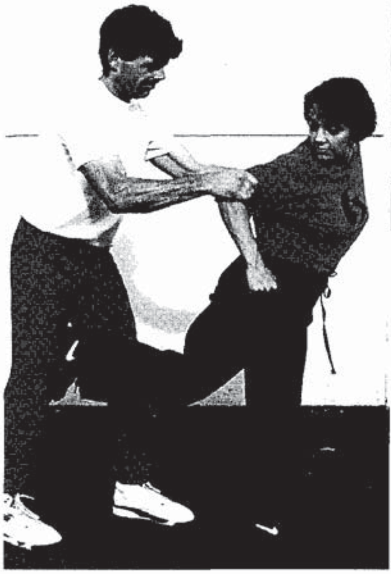
That's it. The techniques are easy to learn because they are



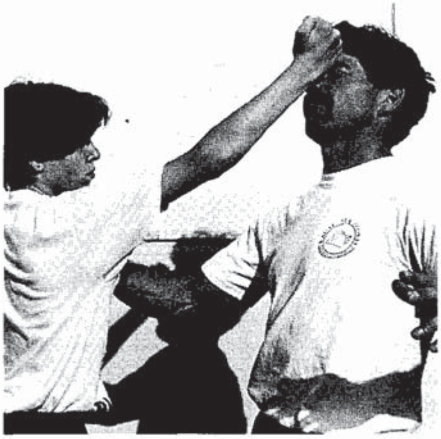
Left. - When grabbed by the arm, kick straight forward into the attacker's thigh.

Below. - When attacked from the side, kick outward in a stomping fashion into the attacker's unprotected leg.



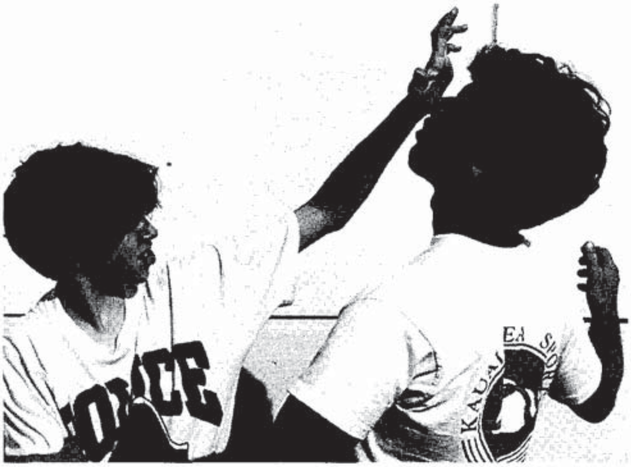


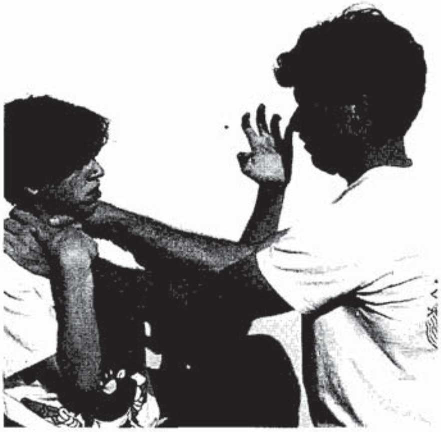
Right. - When grabbed from behind, notice how he leaves his legs open for a back kick.



Left. - When your shoulder is grabbed, immediately slam the heel of your fist down onto the attacker's open face.

Below. - When grabbed, drive your palm into the attacker's nose.





Right. - When choked, claw with your fingers into the attacker's vulnerable eyes.

based on natural movement with which women are already familiar. In less than an hour of practice in the air and on bags, women start to feel confident with the techniques. Then when they evaluate the different ways they can be grabbed—from the front, the back and while on the ground—they can see the openings, and start thinking about which foot and hand techniques would work best. Since the concept is simple and the techniques are natural, women begin showing proficiency in just one class.

Although the above program has proven beneficial after only three hours, the more hours a person can put into training the better. Once a program has been learned, twenty minute practice sessions every other week will help maintain proficiency.

Know that some rapists will not be stopped no matter how you respond. It's imperative that you don't feel guilty if your submitting or fighting back didn't work. Your goal is to survive, and to do so is your greatest achievement.

CAN A WOMAN RAPE A MAN?

Of course a man can rape another man and, in fact, male rape victims account for about 10 percent of all rapes. But how can a woman rape a man if the man doesn't want to be raped? Doesn't he have to have a particular anatomical response for the rape to be successful?

The fact is, some men respond to an attack with what is termed "masochistic titillation," meaning they respond with physical arousal as a result of being fearful of getting hurt.

Then there is the issue of psychological coercion, a controversial area that raises the question of whether it can be technically called rape when a woman coerces a man and belittles his manhood until he engages in sex. One study showed that 46 percent of women respondents and a surprising 62 percent of men said they had unwanted sex because they were pressured and criticized into it.

There are some people who argue that by even saying that men can be raped by women reduces the importance of the entire issue of rape. People who believe this most likely have never seen a traumatized male victim.

THINK ABOUT THIS MEN

Though this chapter is directed at ways to avoid and defend against rape, it would not be complete without talking to the men as to what can get them into trouble. It would seem that what constitutes the crime of rape would be obvious to all, but that is not the case. Some men have been taught, usually by example from their fathers and other male role models, that it's their right as males to take from a woman what they want. Other men, because of naivete or just plain ignorance, believe rape is only committed by strangers who leap out of shrubs at night and attack pretty college coeds.

If these are your beliefs, read, learn, and follow these points.

- "No" means no. There is no way around this and if you keep that in the front of your mind, you will avoid a lot problems. Even if you are completely convinced she really means "yes," respect her "no."
- Your height and weight can be intimidating to a woman. A woman may say she had sex because she was afraid of your physical size.
- Know that a woman may be unsure of what she wants. If you apply pressure, you might be forcing her.
- A "no" is not necessarily a personal rejection. For whatever

reason, she is simply choosing not to have sex at that particular time.

- When in doubt about her intentions, ask. If you don't understand what she is communicating, stop and get it clarified. It might break the mood, but it will keep you out of trouble and save her from potential trauma.
- Know that rape is a crime of violence. People who rape are motivated by a need to dominate and control. Rape is a serious crime, one that is looked down upon even by the lowliest con in prison.
- Your date might want a different kind of intimacy. Though she may be indicating some kind of sexual intimacy, she may not want to go as far as you. You must not push her further than she wants to go.
- Control your sexual urge. Know that your sexual desire may distort your perception of what she wants. You can't help feeling desire, but you absolutely must control your actions.
- It's illegal to take advantage of a woman who is incapable of giving consent. If she doesn't have the mental faculties to refuse you—this includes intoxication—and you have sex with her, you can be arrested for rape.
- Your intoxication is not a defense to rape. You will still get charged for rape because the law says you are responsible for your actions.
- It doesn't matter if you bought her dinner, that she teased you, that she dressed sexy, or you have had sex with her before. If she doesn't want to, you can't force her.

STALKING

There have been cases where celebrities have been relentlessly pursued for months, sometimes years by obsessed, dangerously sick people who have committed burglary, assault, and even murder. Over the past few years, famous celebrity cases, such as David Letterman's and Jodie Foster's, have brought the crime of stalking into the limelight.

Though celebrity stalking gets all the media attention, statistics show it accounts for less than 20 percent of all cases. Around 30 percent of stalking cases involve minor celebrities, such as local television newscasters. The remaining, largest percentage, involves ordinary people.

Though stalking has gotten lots of publicity in recent years, it's not a new phenomena. In fact, the Committee on the Judiciary of the United States estimates that around 200,000 people in the United States are stalked each year. The Committee predicts that around 6 million women will be stalked at some point in their lives.

The Los Angeles Police Department has broken stalkers into three categories.

- Erotomania is the smallest category, consisting of people who think the person they are stalking is deeply in love with them. These stalkers are usually women who most often target actors and politicians.
- Love Obsession accounts for over 40 percent of stalkers.

Most are men who believe they can make their victims love them.

- Simple Obsession is the largest group, primarily males. They are usually known to their victims and are the most likely of the three categories to turn violent.

No matter which category stalkers come from, they have a strong need to control their objective. Whether their motive is revenge, some distorted sense of love, or a need to hurt their victims, they want to demonstrate their power of control.

Being the object of a stalker can take a tremendous psychological toll on you. Though it's traumatic to be burglarized or to have your car stolen, such crimes usually happen only once or twice. Stalking, however, is on-going. In fact, it's not uncommon for stalking incidents to go on for several years.

When the stalker is rejected, the love fascination can turn to hatred and rage. When that happens, the stalker is not only obsessively focused, but is in a mental state highly capable of violence.

As she was preparing for bed, a 47-year-old woman was going through her usual routine of checking her door locks and shutting off the living room lights. Suddenly a hail of bullets exploded through her front windows, showering the room with glass, and shattering lamps, pottery and picture frames. Two days later, her 45-year-old ex-boyfriend, who had been stalking her for months, was arrested for the drive-by shooting.

While stalking laws allow the police to arrest stalkers, incarceration may or may not stop them. A person functioning under psychological obsessiveness won't be deterred by the threat of jail. Some stalkers continue their harassment from behind bars via letters and telephone calls. Once free, the stalking begins again.

Police departments have little or no resources to personally protect every victim of a stalker. Most police agencies have to strain to fill all their patrol districts each and every shift. There are never enough police officers to act as someone's personal bodyguard.

This means that if you become the victim of a stalker, you most likely will be on your own. The police will work with you as much as they can given the existing laws, but as has been stated several times in this text, your day to day safety will be your responsibility.

All the techniques discussed throughout this text will help you, to include:

- Secure your home
- Use a rental mailbox
- Alarm your car
- Get an unlisted telephone
- Be cognizant of your surroundings
- Get a club, chemical spray, or a firearm
- Tell your friends not to give out your address or telephone number
- If your work place has a security officer, tell him about it
- Vary your routine
- Get a big dog

Resist the temptation to call 911 every time something happens. Call only when the incident is threatening to life or property, but still document every incident. If the stalker calls you, make a note of the date, time and what was said. If the stalker is following you, make a note of it. If he talks to a fellow employee, or to your children, or mails you a package, make a note.

Careful documentation of each incident, no matter how small, will be invaluable when you go to court because the burden of proof will be on you, the victim. The better your documentation of what has been going on, the better chance the judge will do something to help you.

A FINAL THOUGHT

Your safety and survival is your responsibility.

That is a frightening thought when you think about it, especially these days when so many people try to shirk their responsibilities and pass them on to someone else. But your personal safety is one area where you can't just sit back and hope someone else takes care of things for you. After all, you have a personal interest in the matter - **your body**.

We can complain all day about how frightening and dangerous some parts of our lives are, but complaining and wishing it were different won't change anything.

Doing something about it will.

First you must develop a strong mental attitude about how you are going to live. You must adamantly believe that you have a right to live your life peacefully and that no one has a right to hurt you or take what is yours. You are not going to cower behind closed doors and shake in your boots. When you develop a powerful philosophy that you are not going to stand idly by and let the predators take over, you will have the mind set to fight back.

Secondly, you must educate yourself as to how to fight back. Your education begins by staying informed as to what the crime problems are in your city, your neighborhood, and on your block. Get involved with organizations that work on crime issues: neighborhood watch groups, court watch, police/community organizations, PTAs, and so on. Take self-defense classes and, if you choose to get a weapon, learn how to use it.

Read books such as this one on the issue of safety, then discuss what you learn with your family and friends.

Learn to count on yourself because the police, your friends, family, and neighbors are not always there to help you. Know that when trouble comes your way, it will probably be when you are all alone. Shoulder the responsibility for your safety, and take the time and effort to know how to be safe in a dangerous world.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Loren W. Christensen began his career in law enforcement in 1967 as a military policeman in the US Army. In 1972 he joined the Portland Police Bureau in Oregon where he still works today. He has worked virtually every job on the Bureau, including the Gang Enforcement Team, Dignitary Protection, and as an instructor in officer survival. He is considered an expert in police defensive tactics and skinhead street gangs.

Loren holds several black belts in karate, jujitsu, and arnis and has written dozens of articles and seven books on the martial arts.

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